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The Editors
TRIUMPH IN POLAND

ONE DOLLAR

SEPTEMBER 12, 1980

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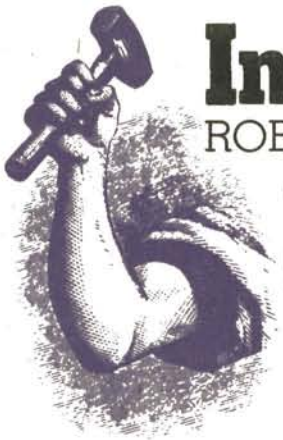

Industrial Democracy, Ltd.
ROBERT A. SENSER

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MARY MEEHAN

An open letter to the G.O.P. conservatives
ALAN WOLFE

REVIEWS: Daniel M. Murt ... ne Howard, Michael Hanch...

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Correspondence

Being & Big Mac-ness

Lewisburg, Pa.

To the Editors: I thought you'd be charmed to know that in response to the Sartre article [July 4] I was sent two free hamburger tickets to McDonald's. It turns out that one of our local McDonald franchise owners is also a *Commonweal* reader. Who says the Lord does not work in mysterious ways His wonders to achieve!

DENNIS O'BRIEN

Mythstatements?

Los Angeles, Calif.

To the Editors: Far more than we need any particular economic or political doctrine, we need honest confrontation of opposing views. This is not a matter of being "fair" to opponents, but of being straight with readers.

Richard B. DuBoff's "The New Economic Mythology" [July 4] is itself shot through with mythology and misstatements of the issues. Running through his whole discussion is an assumption that so-called "conservative economics" is a defense of businessmen, or depends on the virtues or wisdom of businessmen. If there is any place where so-called "conservative economics" is taught, it must be the University of Chicago, where I studied under Milton Friedman. I cannot recall ever hearing businessmen praised at the University of Chicago. Indeed, there is not a single word of praise for businessmen anywhere in Adam Smith's 900-page classic, *The Wealth of Nations*. A distinguished Chicago economist named Jacob Viner once pointed out that an impressive socialist oration could be constructed out of Adam Smith's many denunciations of businessmen and discussions of market imperfections.

There are serious and fundamental issues of economic efficiency and (more important) human freedom that need to be explored, but which are ignored in the kind of good guys-versus-bad guys picture presented by Professor DuBoff. We need to talk about the kinds of incentives and constraints facing alternative decision-makers, whether they wear business suits, military uniforms, or a reformer's halo. We may even need to go back to the nature of man himself, and what the limitations of his knowledge and morality imply about the kinds of social processes he can and cannot handle. And for evidence we need something much more substantial than quotations from the sacred writings of Galbraith or Veblen.

THOMAS SOWELL
Professor of Economics,
Univ. of California, Los Angeles

Family revival time

Brooklyn, N.Y.

To the Editors: Stanley Hauerwas' "The Moral Meaning of the Family" [Aug. 1] is less helpful than it first appears to anyone struggling with the significance and humane functioning of the family.

What seems, in places, to be an attempt to desentimentalize our notion of family or to examine the societal stresses that affect family dynamics, turns out to be just one more call to reinforce the fiber of the family. In the end, the piece is more appropriate to a revival tent than to a forum for useful inquiry.

Hauerwas concedes that the politics of the family "are too often the dirtiest politics of them all." But then as a compendium of dirty politics he offers manipulative parental sacrifice — as if the varieties of psychological abuse and intrafamilial warfare went no further than the Jewish Mother syndrome (or what E.M. Forster cannily termed "petty unselfishness.").

Hauerwas writes as if the statistics on familial cruelty were the stuff of literature, grist for the manufacture of fine phrases in a didactic essay. But for those of us who have grown up with incest (a surprisingly common by-product of the "intensity of family life"), with schizophrenia or alcoholism, or with the covert destructiveness of ordinary family members, "to be stuck with a history and a people" is to be seared for life.

The "wisdom" of the elderly is, as much as anything, a literary conceit. The lack of affection and regard between generations is, too often, sadly earned. Inter-generational estrangement has numerous roots, many of them having nothing to do with "the ambiguity of modern life." To blame such alienation on Social Security is just plain silly (all the more so for the vast inadequacy of the system).

"Set out in the world with no family . . . we will simply be captured by the reigning ideologies of the day." Perhaps. Yet one wonders to what extent the psychological factors needed to maintain the cohesiveness and moral authority of the family are also those that contribute to susceptibility to ideology. From what do ideologies, whether religious or secular, derive their strength if not from the creation of that "privileged emotional climate" that Hauerwas tells us is the family's primary characteristic?

Hauerwas dismisses reservations about bringing children into a precarious world as "an act of despair that often masks the deepest kind of self-hate and disgust." It is just that kind of rhetoric that fed the romanticism of World War I infantrymen who marched forward to end all wars without their helmets on their heads.

In the trenches of the lived life, shrapnel is all too real.

Hauerwas seems unaware that "the falseness of this world" (an offensive term on humanist grounds and more than a little presumptuous) includes his own hortatory solemnity and its resulting distortions. His final glum reminder that neither life nor marriage is about happiness is nothing more than finger-wagging in the face of the self-evident—the liberal tradition at its most fatuous.

MAUREEN MULLARKEY

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THE TRIUMPH OF SOLIDARITY

HOW MANY Poles does it take to change the course of history? There was Lech Walesa and the leaders of the Lenin Shipyard workers. There were 350,000 strikers throughout Poland—and their anxious families and friends. There were the political dissident who forged links between workers and intellectuals after the 1976 riots. There was the Pole in the Vatican and his fellow churchmen in Poland, who had put the church behind the people's demand for human rights. There were all those Poles who have kept alive the spirit of freedom and whose depth of national feeling was an invisible deterrent against Soviet intervention. There were even those elements in the government who, for good reasons or bad, decided to take a chance on change rather than on brute force. But finally it was not numbers alone that triumphed in Poland. For that, governments have an old solution, divide and conquer. It was duly tried by the Warsaw leadership. The government offered shipyard workers a pay hike that would have given them twice the salary of the average industrial worker. It tried to turn the public against the strikers with warnings of the very real economic hardhips the strike was causing. These ploys failed. For what triumphed in Poland is what was blazoned on the T-shirts that quickly appeared: solidarity.

There are two ways of looking at the astonishing concessions won by the Polish workers. One is that they are absolutely incompatible with a one-party Communist regime, in which case it is only a matter of time before either the newly-won rights of free association and expression are extinguished or the regime itself is thrown into question—a sure cause for Soviet intervention. The other is that some kind of *modus vivendi* can be developed, in which case a pattern may emerge for the evolution of other Eastern European nations locked in the Soviet Communist straitjacket. This much is certain: what was won by solidarity will only be maintained by solidarity. That means solidarity from the West as well. The low profile kept by the U.S. and Western Europe during the August crisis might well be justified, but it is now time for developing careful contingency plans and for coordinating strategy so that in any future crisis the economic ties of the West with Poland can be used on behalf of human rights, not against them.

There are several other ways in which the Polish events ought to make Americans examine their own attitudes. Flora Lewis may have been exaggerating when she wrote in the *New York Times* that what the Polich workers were demanding was "socialism." "They wanted the right to have something to say about conditions in the factories and the economy, which are supposed to belong to them, the right to air their views, more social justice, and less privilege for the leaders." But Albert Shanker was surely on target when he urged Americans to "see in this struggle in Poland what they have not always been able to see in their own backyard: that a union gives workers dignity, and that a union is not just a vehicle allowing a worker to win

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one benefit or another but, rather, a permanent instrument enabling him to fight for his rights without fear of punishment or reprisal." Alexander Cockburn, in the *Village Voice*, was even sharper: "This solidarity with insurgent labor seems to wane once the strikes are taking place this side of the Iron Curtain. . . . Once the *Wall Street Journal* remembers its priorities, it will be urging the Polish government to deal severely with the outrageous and inflationary demands of the toilers and recommending that Milton Friedman be taken on as special assistant to Edward Gierek." And then there is this brief report:

> SAN SALVADOR, Aug. 26 (UPI) — Jailed leaders of an electrical workers' strike that blacked out El Salvador last Thursday will be tried in military courts and face possible four-year prison sentences, the authorities say.
>
> A military spokesman said the 17 leaders would be tried under a new law bringing 100,000 public service employees under the control of the Defense Ministry.
>
> The law went into effect three days after the strike by 1,500 hydro-electric plant workers who vowed not to return to their jobs until alleged government repression ended. The junta seized the power plants, ending the strike.

No two situations are exactly parallel, but perhaps there are connections we should be making.

Theology in the Americas

NAME YOUR SOCIALISM

TIME FOR A BASIC CLARITY

FOR SIX DAYS at the beginning of August, five hundred Christian social activists gathered in Detroit. How significant was this event—the second Theology in the Americas conference? By certain external measures, it was certainly important. Major theologians were participants. So were some seventy representatives of radical social movements in other nations. The *National Catholic Reporter* carried a story on the meeting on its front page.

And certainly the conference's organizers saw the event as important. Five years ago, they claimed, a similar meeting had been "heralded . . . as a landmark event in the development of a North American theology of liberation." In fact, the participants in that 1975 meeting had found it impossible to coalesce around a *single* theology of liberation. Instead they had mounted nine projects, each with its base in a separate constituency—blacks, Hispanics, women, labor, Native Americans, and so on. The 1980 conference was meant to bring together the work of these projects and, if possible, unite them in a common direction for the period to come.

Those hopes, however, went unfulfilled. A gauntlet of lectures and panels left participants little time to react and express their continuing interest in the separate projects. Moreover, as one well-informed participant said, "The organizers tried to shape the conference day by day so that it would lead to a rousing affirmation of socialism." The result, naturally, was a revolt. A coalition of representatives from the minority projects—blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asian-Americans—joined with the women activists to take control of Theology in the Americas away from the conference organizers.

And that, apparently, was pretty much it. Of course, the meeting brought together a lot of old friends, and created some new friends, and there was surely much encouraging talk and even a bit of spiritually refreshing socializing squeezed between all those lectures, which lectures, too, will no doubt find their way into another Orbis Press volume. But for the moment, is there anything more to say about Theology in the Americas?

I am afraid there is. Shortly after the conference ended, a friend mentioned to me the obstacles she had encountered in applying to attend the Detroit gathering. Despite the fact that the conference's attendance fell far short of the anticipated 750 and despite the fact that participants were being accepted at the door, it seems that various pressures were exerted to discourage certain applicants. What these applicants had in common was a connection with the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), the political group whose most visible member and National Chairman is Michael Harrington.

Now the report of this maneuvering offended my sense of fair play and raised questions in my mind about the good faith of the conference's organizers. It also raised some political questions: why should people who showed themselves so determined, even too determined, to urge an affirmation of socialism want to discourage participation from one of the most successful socialist groups in the country?

There is a circumscribed answer and a large answer to that question. The circumscribed answer has to do with Theology in the America's attitude toward the U.S. labor movement. DSOC, of course, is known for its belief that the American labor movement is a key component in any strategy for radical social change—the labor movement, that is, as it presently exists, in its distinctly non-socialist form. DSOC believes that there is a logic that leads from liberal reform to socialist demands, and accordingly it works willingly with a portion of the established labor leadership on common "liberal" concerns. An opposing view has it that most labor leadership has been assimilated into the status quo, and that the only hope for change lies with explicitly radical dissidents within unions who must fight their own allegedly unrepresentative union leadership as vigorously as they fight management. The organizers of the conference being of this latter viewpoint, it followed that DSOC participation in Detroit should be covertly limited. The outcome desired was the outcome achieved:

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Theology in the Americas will target its concern on small groups of labor insurgents. This step is not as small a matter of tactics as it may seem. In my opinion, it creates a barrier between Theology in the Americas and the major organized expression of American working people, but then I view from the matter from a DSOC standpoint.

That is the circumscribed answer. The larger answer has to do with the nature of the socialism that Theology in the Americas was posed to affirm. Ever since Lenin denounced the existing working-class organizations for their support of World War I, the view that the "true" interests of working people have been betrayed by their leaders, and that hope for the future can be located only in small, dissident groups, has largely been the outlook of a special strand of socialism. This strand believes that genuine social change requires the formation and deployment of a revolutionary avant-garde, a theory that has led to the personal and party dictatorships of the Communist nations.

The connection between this attitude toward the labor movement and this strand of socialism is historical, not logical. There can, in fact, be many other reasons for supporting labor dissidents—an old-fashioned liberal concern for union democracy, for example. Unfortunately, as I inquired into the background of the Detroit meeting, I was given to believe that the historical pattern was at work: key elements in Theology in the Americas were at least "close to" the Communist party and other Leninist left-wing sects.

Frankly I find this hard to believe. I find it hard to believe that in 1980 thoughtful and humane individuals would identify with the kind of socialism that sponsors a Gulag any more than they would identify with the kind of Christianity that sponsors an Inquisition. And I know full well the destructiveness and fruitlessness of charges about individuals' "true" political beliefs, and consequent arguments about "red-baiting," etc. Leave personal politics, whether private or public, out of it. But given the questions raised on this score, it can reasonably be demanded that Theology in the Americas, if it is going to "explore" socialism, demonstrate a basic clarity about what kind of socialism it has in mind. Which brings me to my second point.

IF THERE IS any way that the outsider can fathom the mind of Theology in the Americas as it approached the Detroit meeting, it is through the "Working Document" prepared for the conference. Unfortunately, this thirty-page *tour d'horizon* of the political and economic "context" and of theological premises verges on the unreadable. No doubt this is partly due to its being a collective effort, and one requiring compression. But whatever the cause, it must be said that large sections are intellectually pathetic. Obvious truths sit side-by-side with the most unqualified or far-fetched claims. Every evil besetting humankind is laid at the feet of capitalism. The style sounds a drum beat of assertions, with numerous problems, qualifications, and doubts ignored or evaded.

Consider this passage, from the section on the Hispanic community:

> Rejection of a future in the United States by Puerto Rico and increased solidarity of Hispanics with Latin America would necessitate a new economic order in the Americas. Such a change would require a regionalization of production and energy consumption. Moreover, this kind of shift would likely favor the autonomy of homogeneous political units in which the environment would be preserved and citizens could establish collective goals instead of being victims of consumerism.

Now this is either (a) a bad translation from the Spanish, or (b) fanciful nonsense. Perhaps it is both.

In the end, what the document says is not as important as what it doesn't say. Its list of the standard evil "isms"—racism, sexism, classism, and imperialism—omits *statism* (and, of course, totalitarianism)—even though, as a practical matter, anti-government fears and resentments are a major factor in that American socio-economic "context" the conference was supposed to consider. Despite the fact that the whole document converges toward an endorsement of socialism, there is no discussion of the considerable experience the world has already had with what calls itself by that term. The only references to "socialist countries" are favorable. There is mention of the "liberation of Vietnam," but not of what transpired later, nor of the genocide in "socialist" Cambodia. The section on foreign policy skirts all questions of aggressive and dangerous actions by socialist nations. The recent shift to the right in American foreign policy is ascribed only to "fears" and "myths." The Soviet Union is mentioned only as a negotiating partner in SALT II, and Afghanistan only as providing an alibi for American Cold Warriors.

Among the listed objectives for the Detroit conference was: "To keep the *international dimension* as a priority in theology and to strengthen links with movements in which Christians participate in liberation struggles." As I write, Polish workers, under emblems of their Christianity, are struggling for a minimum of freedom and dignity. About *their* liberation struggle the working document has nothing to say, nor anything about the form of "socialism" that oppresses them.

In an article on why he is a socialist, the Berlin theologian Helmut Gollwitzer has written of "the nightmare image" presented to the world by "the countries that call themselves socialist." Because of this and other ambiguities, "it has become almost impossible to use the word socialism."

> Today, whoever says that he is a socialist must immediately specify in what sense this term is to be understood. He can, however, demand to discuss only the socialism that he represents. Therefore, the socialist finds himself today in a situation similar to that of the Christian. Any person who declares himself to be a Christian, considering the number of Christian groups and confessions, must immediately specify in what way he considers himself a Christian, and he may thus insist on discussing only that way, and not to be held responsible for the sins of other Christian groups.

Those Theology in the Americas activists who wish to explore a "socialist alternative" should not be burdened with all the horrors done in the name of socialism—if, that is, they make

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clear their awareness of those horrors and the ways in which their own socialism is of a qualitatively different sort.

In view of all this, I should be pleased that the coalition of minorities and women resisted the rush to affirm some vague "socialism," and that they insisted that the directing vision in Theology in the Americas did not reflect the complexity or the concreteness of social injustice as their constituencies experienced it. And in a way I am pleased. Unfortunately, the reports of their "takeover" also provoked in me a sense of *déjà vu*. It reminded me of events I witnessed in the late sixties, when minority spokespersons combined the moral authority of their victim status and charges of racism (now sexism is added) to gain greater leverage in various organizations. About the ultimate justification for such claims I need not argue; as a practical matter, the consequences almost always seemed to be self-destructive. A premium was put on a species of manipulative rhetoric—popularly known as "mau-mauing"—and in the end both whites and minority members who were afflicted with any degree of intelligence and self-respect grew repelled by these psychological games and took their concerns elsewhere. The eighties are not the sixties, and maybe some lessons have been learned. I hope so, but I also recall the observation of Clarence Darrow, "History repeat itself. That's one of the things wrong with history."

I write all this as an outsider to Theology in the Americas, although only after extended conversations with a number of knowledgeable participants (I did not reach the official organizers, all of whom, I was told, were on vacation). There is a considerable danger of misemphasis in such an outsider's view; yet many of the insiders are reluctant to undermine their movement's public reputation. One friend even warned me that publishing criticism of Theology in the Americas would give comfort to Michael Novak! Heaven forfend.

Yet I can understand their reluctance. To begin with, and this should be stressed, *every person I spoke with, including those in disagreement with the organization of the Detroit conference, thought that Theology in the Americas was, is, and promises to remain a valuable undertaking*. But if the distance of an outsider risks distortion, it can also provide perspective. It can help one get hold of matters of principle. And I am persuaded that there are some matters of principle that need to be candidly faced and honestly resolved about Theology in the Americas. The road it has been traveling, at least to Detroit, strikes me as an intellectual, political, and—most important—a moral dead-end.

PETER STEINFELS

Of several minds: *Abigail McCarthy*

CITY LIGHTS

MAKING THE CITIES WHOLE AGAIN

THE PRIVILEGED have returned by now. They are back at work in the city—back from summer places in the country and on the shore, back from the cool mountains and beaches. If their city is New York they came from Maine, from Vermont and New Hampshire, from the Berkshires, from the North Shore, from Cape Cod and the Islands, from Newport and the Connecticut seaside towns; from all these places they returned, converging on the parkways through Westchester County. Their radios rang with the Westchester invitation to stay there, to bring their business there—to be near that city which, so the radio voice cheerfully assures them, is "still the commercial center of the world" but to be free of its problems.

"Still the center." They must think of that, and wonder how long, as their streams of traffic filter through the blasted canyons of the South Bronx, where tattered curtains flap through the broken windows in the high-rises, where the old wander like ghosts and the young run in predatory packs. The answer to the South Bronx has been to run away or to destroy like the arsonists whose fires may be as much a response to atavistic instinct as to greed.

But at the heart of the city there is still glitter and government and the machinery of money called trade. The affluent do their business and find the source of live entertainment and the inspiration of the arts. And the poor and homeless make its streets their own. In some queer way both the rich in their aerie-like offices and the homeless sheltered in dark doorways love the city. They have lost community but they still have the place. If we could find the connection between them we might find the way to make cities whole again. That can probably never be done by plan. There is something organic about the rise and fall of cities. (Washington, our most-planned city, is only now, after two centuries, beginning to think of itself as an entity.)

Cities, growing from the way their people came together, have personalities of their own. In the past (and for many of us still), the very names of cities evoked snatches of song and verse: "Paris in the springtime, Paris in the fall—"; "East Side, West Side, all around the town . . . when me and Mamie O'Rourke danced the light fantastic on the sidewalks of New York . . ."; "Chicago, Chicago—that wonderful town . . ."; "San Francisco, open your golden gate—"; "Meet me in St. Louis, Louie, meet me at the fair. . . ." Even Kansas City has its song. They are manufactured songs, of course, but they have been sung enthusiastically by so many because to so many these cities were the center of life and movement, of variety and texture, of bright lights and heightened experience.

The pull of cities is the pull of people toward each other, toward a complication of the experience of life that transcends the individual. The young Quechua boy in an isolated village in the

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high Andes who told a visitor that he did not know what heaven was like but that he was certain that it was a city, was giving voice to an age-old yearning. It is a yearning shared by those who have only heard tales of the city and by those who are exiled from it. "Quel temps fait-il à Paris? Le ciel est-il bleu ou gris?"

When God was a distant God, people found him on mountain tops and in lonely forest shrines. But when God spoke through men, cities became holy places. Great religions have their holy cities—Rome, Mecca, Benares-on-the-Ganges, and the epitome of all, Jerusalem, Jerusalem the Golden, David's holy city—the metaphor for cities to come. Cities were the places where people worshipped together and to which they journeyed together in pilgrimages.

But people find that which transcends their solitary limitations not only in the holy, but in truth, in justice, and in beauty; so cities were places of learning, of order and government, and places where artists and writers gathered. But, most fundamentally, they were places of exchange, a systematizing of a discovery lost in the mists of the history of humankind: that we can benefit from and enhance our lives by satisfying each other's needs, by exchanging goods and services. Hand in hand with that ancient discovery must have gone another—the joy in work which is called craftsmanship, and the joy of sharing that work with others. (During the Babylonian captivity we are told that "the craftsmen and the engravers departed out of Jerusalem.") These discoveries were discoveries of what it is to be human. From them came trade. Trade binds us. The great civilizing city-states were built on, and grew from, trade—Florence, Ravenna, Padua, Siena, Genoa. And trade builds on peace.

What I see in all this is that the things which built the city were good things, things which were humanizing, no matter how materialistic their aspect. If today the middle class has fled the cities, the rich live there in luxurious ghettoes behind guards and bars, and the poor live in decayed shells or on the streets, the fault is not in what makes the city. The core city is no longer doing all the things which makes the city a city. It is not the whole city.

According to John Herbers writing recently in the *New York Times*, the "cities are performing a more limited role. Reduced to a narrow economic base, they are the keepers of the poor and the old. They are, as Mayor Koch noted, the assimilators of the least-skilled and most oppressed of the new immigrants from abroad. . . . Experts say that for the foreseeable future the cities may have to resign themselves to their limited role and hope that somehow the larger society will assume more of the burden of caring for the poor and the old isolated within their boundaries."

But why boundaries? The boundaries of any city should take in those who have moved to its fringes and suburbs—the businesses as well as the people. They must take in all those who draw their sustenance from its trade and exchange. Only then can the city be an organic whole. To do this we must, of course, abandon our old geographical concepts of where a city *is*. And we must realize that every city, like Jerusalem of song and story, is an idea as well as a place; that, like Rome of old it exists where its far-flung citizens are; and that what radiates from the center must be returned in some way to renew the core.

ABIGAIL McCARTHY

Of several minds: *Frank Getlein*

SAVING THE GENERALS

HOW CONSCRIPTION INDUCES INSANITY

Judge Civiletti will put you in jail,
It's hard, it's hard.
Judge Civiletti won't give you no bail,
It's hard times in the Carterville jail.

WELL, IT WAS funny, any way you look at it. Here was the nation's highest law enforcement officer, Civiletti, coming on the tube on Tuesday night, all networks and who knows how many rock 'n' roll stations, addressing all reluctant registrants for the Carter conscription. "You, boy," he said to my ear, which, I readily admit, colored his speech with the tones of the people he hangs around with, works for, and defends at all costs, "You, boy, you get yo' ass down to the Post Office and register, right now, or I'm goin' th'ow yo' ass in jail and you'll never get out. Hear me, boy?"

And then, here was the nation's highest law enforcement officer, Civiletti again, coming on the tube on Thursday night, all networks, to explain that *in re* Billy Carter, "No, I don' b'leeve we'll prosecute. You see, dere, when a fella fails to register after we been beggin' him for two years and then, when he hears we are thinkin' of prosecutin' he finally does register, why, we don' normally prosecute. I mean, the law has been fulfilled, why be vindictive?"

Why indeed? On the face of it, the registration resister, when finally tracked down by Javert-Civiletti, can reasonably plead that he reasonably assumed that everything would be hunky-dory if he agreed at last to register just as the Justice Department,as it is strangely called, was ready to sock it to him. He could presumably subpoena the attorney-general himself, assuming Civiletti still has the job, and question him closely about those statements. I don't know about judges, especially those appointed by the president with the advice of the attorney-general, but I can't imagine a jury outside the Pentagon that wouldn't turn the kid loose.

The frosting on the cake was Civiletti's attack of memory lapses, apparently one of the health hazards of the office, shared by John Mitchell, Richard Kleindienst, and (you could look it up) Harry Daugherty in the really good old days.

Meanwhile, we must assume, Jimmy

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Carter retired to the Rose Garden to meditate on a favorite theme of his in 1976, "Why non-registrants with high connections are treated differently from non-registrants with no connections at all." If we reject the obvious explanation as unworthy of philosophical inquiry, we are left with the explanation that our free-enterprise society naturally favors the entrepreneur and Billy Carter was certainly being enterprising in his Libyan connection. The non-registrant picking up a cool two hundred grand with prospects of a half mil is clearly in the tradition that made this country great and should be encouraged; the registration resister, on the other hand, is just trying to save his ass and to hell with him.

Delightful as all this has been and doubtless will continue to be as the campaign and the various investigations swing into high gear together, it all distracts attention from the real reason why the Carter conscription is a profound mistake, why conscription in this country when there is not a war on, by which I mean a real, legally declared, fully acknowledged war, with price controls, rationing as needed, at least a *pro forma* attempt to limit war profits, all that and more, is a cataclysmic blunder.

That reason is, very simply, that conscription in such non-war circumstances drives American generals right out of their heads, as is easily demonstrated from the last time we had peacetime conscription, namely in the years leading up to and throughout the Indochina Wars. The Russians and Chinese are different. Our European allies are different. They've always had conscription. In Russia's case, it's part of the czarist heritage, like the pictures in the Hermitage, the ballet, the bureaucracy, and the all-around enslavement of the citizenry by the government. The Russians, with a tiny handful of exceptions, wouldn't want it any other way. It makes them feel, well, Russian. The Chinese, on the other hand, get the warm pleasant feeling that they're building socialism when the army takes them away for a spell. For the French, conscription evokes the Corsican Upstart and *la gloire*, which they haven't had much of since: military service is a small price to pay. For Germans, both East and West, similarly mystical gratifications are derived from involuntary military service: they are preparing themselves for the return of Barbarossa, Old Fritz, the Iron Chancellor, the Crazy Corporal, perhaps all the above, from their graves beneath the Rhine. And others have their others.

We don't.

Because they do, the generals in all those countries take conscription for granted. The recruits are there as needed, can be called in as desired by classes. No strain.

Because we don't, when we conscript men in peacetime, American generals go off their rockers. That is one trenchant reason for what happened in Vietnam and one, unfortunately, that, to my knowledge, has yet to be stumbled upon by the people who wrote the Pentagon Papers, by the punditry at large, or even by the anti-war movement. American generals, on the record, go off their rockers when handed conscription for the same reason a six-year-old goes off his when handed the key to the confectionary store, an arms merchant off his when given a cost-plus contract. It's the big chance. We don't get it often, we've got it, lets use it; or, as they said in more elegant times, since God has given us the conscription, let us enjoy it.

And they do. That's exactly what happened in Vietnam. Do you recall a single strategic plan for winning that war? There wasn't any. What there was, instead, was a series of what can only be called public relations gimmicks—except that most PR pro's wouldn't dream of using the transparently flimflam devices as a "strategy" that existed entirely in press releases. Strategic hamlets, good grief: straight out of the military history of the American West, with its system of forts and without any relevance at all to the way things were in 'Nam. My own favorite was the "Cong sniffer."—so help me, I'm not making this up—a program for training cockroaches to go on the alert at the smell of nearby enemy, thus allowing the American conscripts to jump up and save Vietnam from the Vietnamese. More sinister was the Free Fire Zone, a plan to kill everybody for miles around and then to wonder why the natives didn't proffer their hearts and minds. This particular insanity of the generals so affected Gloria Emerson that, some years later, she had to be restrained from hiring a plane and a bullhorn to fly over Ellsworth Bunker's summer place in New England crying out that a Free Fire Zone had been declared, you have five minutes, run, Bunker, run. We all have our dreams.

The main point is that there was no strategy at all and the reason there wasn't was that the generals were relieved from the necessity of having one: all they had to do was to call up another ten thousand, another twenty, another fifty, and just keep getting them killed and wounded. From a command point of view, peacetime conscription produces the lazy man's war. Why bother with strategy when you can just order up another so many thousands of corpses: eventually there'll be so many the enemy won't be able to get through. That was the theory at Verdun, as far as anyone can discern a theory there, and it was the basic American practice of the Vietnam war.

Difficulties make good art, in war no less than in theatrical production or dancing. Ease makes sloppy art. Conscription gives generals an easy life. If they're not used to conscription, as American generals are not, they go bananas, can't think up things to do fast enough with their wonderful new toy before the dread civilian Congress takes it away from them. All that is one powerful reason we got into Vietnam heavily in the first place and why we handled it so sloppily, from a purely military viewpoint.

The proposition here advanced is that we owe it to our generals not to let them disgrace themselves again because of the deceptive ease offered by conscription. They are honorable men, most of them; some of them are even competent. Like all of us, they can be tempted and conscription is a double temptation for the American military man: you've got it, you ought to use it, and, since you've got it, you don't need to think in conventional or unconventional strategic terms, just throw some more meat into the meatgrinder. We must not lead them into that particular temptation for the second time.

FRANK GETLEIN

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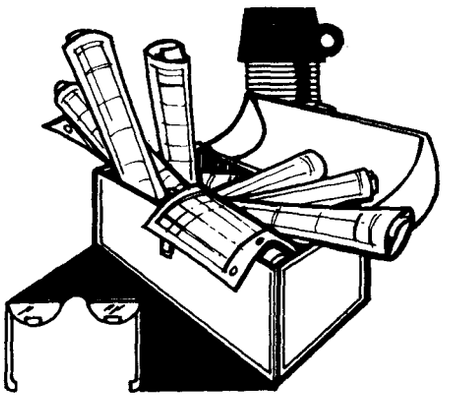
IS CO-DETERMINATION ONLY THE RIPPLE OF THE FUTURE?



Industrial Democracy, Ltd.

ROBERT A. SENSER

LAST OCTOBER when Chrysler Corporation agreed to nominate United Auto Worker President Douglas Fraser to its board of directors, advocates of worker participation were jubilant. They hailed this concession as a big breakthrough in the struggle for the rights of workers. Fraser in May became the first leader of a major union to get a seat on the board of directors of a large U.S. corporation.

"Congratulations," said a telegram Fraser received from Switzerland. "Now I won't feel so lonely."

The telegram came from one of Fraser's UAW colleagues, Herman Rebhan, who works out of Geneva as general secretary of the International Metalworkers Federation. Already a corporate director, Rebhan had beaten Fraser to the inner business sanctum by more than two years — not in the U.S. but in Germany. In January 1978 an electoral college chosen by the 58,000 workers of Ford Motor Company of West Germany elected Rebhan, an American of German descent, as one of their ten representatives on the Ford board. And when the nine other employee representatives quickly tabbed him as chairman of the employee group, he automatically became vice president of the second largest automaker in West Germany.

His lofty Ford connection is part-time work, carrying no salary (only travel expenses and a small allowance, plus a free German Ford sedan that he accepted after some soul-searching). His regular job is that of top full-time official of the 13.5 million-member International Metalworkers Federation (IMF), which has a staff of fifty-two in Geneva and in regional offices on five continents. As one of the few English-speaking practitioners of co-determination, he is in constant demand in Europe and the U.S. for speeches at seminars and meetings of all kinds, including those of employers.

In those speeches and in press interviews, Rebhan promotes the idea of worker participation, and co-determination in particular. He predicts that today's novelty at Chrysler will become tomorrow's fashion on the U.S. labor scene. Recalling the UAW's pioneering of the cost-of-living escalator clause, Rebhan says: "At first other unions were very skeptical about that too, but after a while they got on the bandwagon all over the country. You'll see, the same will happen with board participation by labor."

A common question he gets is whether he doesn't feel uncomfortable wearing two hats. He dislikes that imagery. He doesn't wear *any* hats. He feels he's the same Herman Rebhan whether he's presiding at a union meeting or sitting at the corporation president's right hand side at board meetings.

Isn't he in a conflict of interest situation, at least at times? This objection, Rebhan contends, is based on the assumption that workers' interests are diametrically opposed to those of owners and managers. "Most workers don't accept that," he says. "They worry about the health of the company where they work. They have a stake in its future, and want to know how it's doing business-wise and what its plans and prospects are. That's what I'm there for."

ASKED WHETHER he and his worker colleagues look any different from their business counterparts at board meetings, Rebhan answers: "Not really. What do you want me to do? Wear jeans? I don't wear jeans even at home. In my factory days I always took off my work clothes after work. The idea that workers and union officials have to 'look' like workers is outmoded. You can usually spot the intellectuals at a union convention: they're the ones who dress up to look like they've just walked off the assembly line."

On the more important point, the role he plays, Rebhan concedes that an evolution has taken place: "When you're a steward in a part of a plant, that's your world — you see only the interest of those few workers. Then when you're on the local union executive board for a whole plant or a group of plants, you have to look out for broader interests: both the skilled and semi-skilled workers, for example. Then, moving up as a national leader, you have to reconcile still broader

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interests, including the health of the industry itself. That's how your role changes. You don't 'sell out' — you just have to worry about a bigger picture, instead of just one tiny part of it, and the same happens when you're sitting on a corporate board."

Such representation, Rebhan argues, is an efficient way of getting worker concerns expressed and considered as an important element in policy-making. "It means," he says, "that the company's big decisions are not unilateral and not surprises to those directly affected, the employees." For example, the board must approve in advance any major shift in production from one plant to another, and although such a proposal was recently approved unanimously by the Ford board, "that's because management thought it through carefully in advance, knowing they had to justify their case fully to us, including those who know plant operations inside out."

Shortly after his initiation into the corporate hierarchy, Rebhan skirmished with his business colleagues over whether management should prepare a written status report for each board meeting. "They wanted to keep it oral," Rebhan recalls, "and they posed all sorts of legalistic arguments, such as a need to 'protect business secrets.' But we said, none of that stuff. They finally opened up, with a long report at each meeting on production levels, sales compared to competitors', and so on. Now even management seems happy with the openness."

Accord to Rebhan, many employers in Germany still consider *Mitbestimmung* (co-determination) a dirty word, but they

LABOR REDISCOVERS ITS PAST

L.A. O'DONNELL

POTTSVILLE is the center of the Pennsylvania anthracite region, and the site of the execution of twenty Molly Maguires in 1878. On a memorable weekend in the fall of 1978, a group of two hundred listened to a lecture on the Molly Maguires by Gene Salay, a descendant, and attended an analysis of their trials presented in the original Pottsville courtroom by Philadelphia attorney John M. Elliot. The group toured the Schuylkill County Prison, seeing the dungeons where members of the Mollies were held and the courtyard where they were hanged. The weekend concluded with a visit to Hibernian House, a tavern in nearby Girardville once operated by Jack Kehoe, reputed leader of the secret organization of Irish miners. Three generations later Hibernian House remains a neighborhood tavern run by the Kehoe family.

The Pottsville weekend is an example of the current revival of interest in labor history. The revival derives much of its vigor from our growing fascination with ethnic history. The drama of the Molly Maguires was played out in a period when Irish miners had begun to assert economic power through organization of an early union (the Workingman's Benevolent Association) and political power through increasing involvement with the Democratic Party in state politics. On both fronts their efforts were thwarted by mining interests led by Franklin Gowen, president of the Reading Railroad, which enjoyed a monopoly on coal transport to the Philadelphia market. It was he who defeated the miners in the long strike of 1875, hired Pinkerton James McParlan to spy on the Mollies, and finally acted as chief prosecuter in their trials.

Understandably Pennsylvania would be well represented in this revival since its anthracite coal industry, a crucial source of energy in the nineteenth century, not only recruited a variety of ethnic immigrants into its workforce, but was the spawning ground of industrial unionism. In 1897, during another anthracite strike, a group of several hundred Slavic miners marching in a peaceful protest were brutally attacked by a body of "native American" sheriff's deputies. In the encounter, over twenty of the completely unarmed miners were killed. The story of this little known tragedy was recounted by Michael Novak in *The Guns of Lattimer*, published in 1978. Earlier it had inspired a drive by local labor groups and the United Mine Workers to persuade the Pennsylvania Historical Commission to honor the dead with an historical marker. A small group from among those present at the 1972 dedication of this monument established the Pennsylvania Labor History Society in 1974, to preserve the record of worker struggles.

At the opposite end of the state, the Pittsburgh area was the scene of numerous union-management conflicts in the steel industry, most notably the Homestead Strike of 1892, a disaster that set back unions in the industry for generations. The Pennsylvania Labor History Society (which also sponsored the Pottsville weekend) conceived a program in Homestead involving a boat ride down the Monongahela River following the route taken by Pinkerton men brought in by Henry Clay Frick, Andrew Carnegie's man in charge in Homestead.

The labor history revival, however, did not begin in Pennsylvania but in Chicago, and fortunately it was not founded by academics but by union activists. It was started by Bill Garvey, an international representative of the Steel Workers Union, and a few like-minded men: Les O'Rear of the United Packinghouse Workers, Ray Dickow of the Amalgamated Meatcutters & Butcher Workmen, Rochelle Hart of the Chicago Teachers Union, and William Adelman

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are gradually adjusting to it. He points out that the employers originally feared that unions would "try to achieve in the board room what they failed to get at the collective bargaining table." But the supervisory boards stay clear of negotiating employee wages, hours, and working conditions — those are reserved for bargaining between Ford and the powerful German metalworkers union.

Still, traditional distinctions between labor and management roles have become blurred. For example, Rebhan and one other employee representative are members of a four-man board committee that periodically reviews salary increases for key management personnel.

So far Rebhan has participated in eight board meetings, each a day long. Sessions are generally relaxed but formal (Rebhan has repressed his American habit of calling people by first names). Each meeting is preceded by separate caucuses of the two sides, with Rebhan presiding at the labor caucus, to prepare positions on previously circulated agenda topics. The labor side can, on its own, put items on the agenda (a recent labor-initiated item produced a wide-ranging review of how Ford is faring in engine modernization). Most often, questions are settled by consensus, but in voting, management has the edge because even though each side has ten members, the chairman can cast two votes to break a tie.

Assessing his two-and-a-half years' experience with *Mitbestimmung*, Rebhan says: "I can't say that the millennium has arrived." Still, his experience at Ford has strongly reinforced the belief that he had in co-determination even before practic-

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of the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle campus. They were appalled when, without any particular historical awareness, labor leaders in Chicago participated in the rededication of a statue originally erected as a memorial to policemen killed in the Haymarket Riot of 1886. Shortly after the Democratic convention in Chicago in 1968 the statue had been blown up by the Weathermen. The destruction was lamentable, but evidently the Weathermen knew their labor history a lot better than most Chicago union leaders. Conscious of the irony in this situation, Garvey and his associates pledged to redress the balance somewhat by dedicating a plaque to the labor martyrs of the Haymarket Riot; in an atmosphere of hysteria, these foreign born radicals had been rounded up immediately after the bomb blast, tried, and convicted of conspiracy to murder without any evidence connecting them with the bombing. Garvey and his friends then proceeded to organize the Illinois Labor History Society—first of its kind in the country.

The movement to commemorate the heritage of working people has spread to more than fourteen states around the country where labor history societies have been established. The movement has come to be supported by trade unions to a much greater extent than might have been expected considering the "radical" circumstances of its beginnings. Members of the Labor Press Association have been especially visible at the meetings of these societies. Avoidance of sessions with a heavy academic atmosphere and insistence on discovering and revisiting actual sites of events in labor struggles have given the movement a special appeal. Evening socials on these occasions gather local historians, trade unionists, descendants of those involved in the event, old socialists, and academics in an agreeable camaraderie, often with a definite ethnic flavor. The group in Pottsville was entertained by a professional Irish singing group from the area. Here, in short, is an attractive way to deepen appreciation of labor traditions, the basic purpose of these organizations. This objective has a special significance in view of the almost total ignorance of labor heritage by the average product of our high schools and colleges, hardly a tribute to American education.

The movement has already left traces of its efforts—witness the historical markers in Chicago and Lattimer. Another marker, commemorating the Molly Maguires, was placed at the entrance to the Schuylkill County Prison in Pottsville only last June, and there are others. Presently the Illinois Society is gathering petitions to secure a posthumous pardon for Joe Hill, legendary bard of the Wobblies (Industrial Workers of the World), executed by a firing squad in Utah in 1915. In Pennsylvania the society succeeded in its campaign for a pardon for Jack Kehoe who was convicted, under dubious circumstances, of the killing of a mine foreman in Audenried, Pennsylvania. Although no indictment was forthcoming when the crime occurred in 1862, the charge was abruptly resurrected fourteen years later (after the 1875 strike), and the trial held amidst emotionalism whipped up by a yellow press and Franklin Gowen's remarkable command of public relations. The pardon was signed by Governor Shapp in January 1979. Major participants in this effort were Joseph Wayne, great grandson of Kehoe and John M. Elliot, a Philadelphia lawyer born in Girardville. Elliot argued the case before the State Board of Pardons.

Paying tribute to our forebears in the struggle for social justice is an honorable concern. A society traditionally hostile to organizations of workers needs the antidote of being reminded that, in the long run, democratic values have very often been defined and advanced only as a result of these violent conflicts between labor and capital. Out of these bitter encounters emerged, finally, the recognition of human rights for industrial workers and greater attention to the guarantee of due process for all. The movement also recalls for us the prejudices of native Americans against ethnic minorities freshly landed on our shores and indeed the prejudices of earlier immigrants against later ones. A democratic, pluralistic society must learn the lessons of its history if it hopes to cultivate an enduring harmony among its disparate minorities and if it hopes to cope humanely with its current influx of immigrants.

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ing it. He is more than ever convinced that co-determination ought to — and will — expand beyond its present frontiers.

"Workers today have higher educational achievements than their parents," he points out, "and they are not so bound by the fear that used to make workers so docile — fear of losing their job. Talk about the good old work ethic all you want — part of it was a cringing fear of getting fired. Today that's gone. Workers are more demanding. They want more say on the job." Co-determination, he believes, is a modern response to the need of getting workers involved.

REBHAN IS RIGHT in this sense: as industrial life becomes more complex, the demand — and the need — for worker participation is growing, but not necessarily in the form of seats on corporate boards. AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, for one, is skeptical about the genuine influence worker representatives can have when they join the corporate hierarchy. In any case, so far there is no sign of a bandwagon behind Fraser. And, as Rebhan recognizes, in Europe the co-determination bandwagon has stopped dead.

In the aftermath of World War II, Germany seized upon co-determination as a check against a new cartel-financed fascism and as a democratic alternative to the Communism on its eastern frontier. Co-determination there became the peak of a highly structured labor relations pyramid, which includes work councils and other mechanisms unknown or rare in the U.S. Other countries became intrigued with the new German form of worker participation, and for a while in the late sixties and early seventies it seemed as though the German model would sweep Western Europe. That has happened only in a limited way.

Five other countries (Luxembourg, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway) have adopted laws establishing co-determination, but in various forms weaker than the German model. Although Holland is sometimes listed among the countries having "hard hats" on corporate boards, under Dutch law workers are *prohibited* from serving on the boards of companies where they work. So are their union representatives. The unions do influence the choice of some corporate directors, but those so chosen are pro-labor intellectuals, not hard hats.

More significant than such limitations is the fact that co-determination has not expanded to any new country in the past six years. It failed to win approval of any of West Germany's three big partners in the European Community (EC) — France, Italy, and the United Kingdom. Isolated employers have accepted labor in the board room here and there, but to become implanted as in Germany and the five smaller European countries, co-determination needs the force of national legislation, and that doesn't seem to be in the cards, at least not in the early eighties.

During the past ten years the EC Commission has come forward with various papers proposing that co-determination be phased in throughout the Community. In the publicity surrounding these papers, the distinction between a proposed policy and an approved policy became fuzzy, and the erroneous impression grew in the U.S. that workers were moving into board rooms and getting a share in the management of business firms all over Western Europe. In reality, the Commission's proposals have gotten nowhere. Even the EC Economic and Social Committee, which has about one-third union representation, declined to endorse the Commission proposals. So did the European Parliament, and as a result the Community's decision-making body, the Council of Ministers, has been spared from getting into the controversy.

A big reason for the stalemate is that even West European unions have been unable to agree on the issue. "Worker participation" is widely accepted as a Good Thing, even by some employers, but almost everyone has a specially tailored definition of it. The consensus definition among unions is one less sweeping than a system of labor-capital co-management. Rather, union leaders are pressing for increased access to business information and increased management consultation with labor on key decisions (particularly in the case of multinationals) through channels short of union presence in the corporate hierarchy.

It may be fortunate for the healthy development of worker participation in its various forms that the unions have not bought co-determination hook, line, and sinker. After all, it is a relatively new idea and could use a longer testing period under various economic conditions. Further, the experience of West Germany and its neighbors in implementing co-determination needs more study for answers to questions such as:

- What effect does co-determination have on productivity? Under what conditions?
- Does co-determination inhibit management from taking controversial but necessary decisions?
- What are the practical benefits to ordinary workers? Does co-determination, for example, actually increase their sense of participation in the activities of their company,
- How do the benefits of co-determination compare with those of other forms of worker's participation practiced in Europe and the United States?

Unionists like Herman Rebhan have good preliminary insights into such questions. But policy makers on the labor and management sides will want hard answers before being carried away by what advocates hail as the wave of industry's future.

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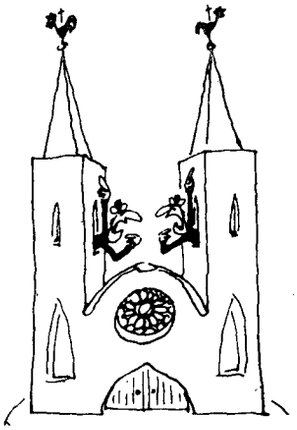
PROBABILISM & THE RIGHT TO KNOW OF MORAL OPTIONS



An immoral morality?

PHILIP S. KAUFMAN

IN MATTERS OF morality, the Roman Catholic church has tended to speak inconsistently to its members. On the one hand, there has been emphasis on the role of conscience in decision making. As our American bishops have stated, ours is a spiritual tradition which accepts "enlightened conscience, even when honestly mistaken, as the immediate arbiter of moral decisions." Presumably, therefore, Catholics have the right to knowledge of legitimate options if they must make enlightened decisions on controverted moral issues. Yet, on the other hand, the Roman magisterium issues authoritative statements on specific moral issues, statements which, as Karl Rahner has said "can make no claim to be definitive" and yet "are nonetheless presented in such a way as though in fact they are definitive." To treat moral issues as closed when actually they are still open, thus depriving Catholics of the knowledge of legitimate choices in their moral decision-making, or leaving them under the impression that only the behavior stipulated by Rome would be morally correct, would itself seem to be objectively immoral.

This is Bernard Häring's point when he says that "to allow others to manipulate one's conscience" is to sin against liberty and sanity. Häring speaks from a personalist, relational position which is, relatively speaking, an innovation in Catholic thinking on morality, and is regarded with misgivings by many in the church. There is another tradition, however, much older and much more widely accepted in Catholic moral thinking, which leads to much the same conclusion. This is "probabilism," a tradition whose history and continuing relevance I would like to examine in some detail.

What is this "system" which moral theologians like Richard McCormick and Bernard Häring affirm as "still of great actuality" for the church? *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* explains: "Probabilism has been described as the moral system according to which in a doubt of conscience about the morality of a particular course of conduct a person may lawfully follow the opinion for liberty, provided it is truly probable, even though the opinion for law is definitely more probable." The opposing system known as "probabiliorism" holds that the opinion for liberty could be followed only if it was clearly *more* probable than the opinion for law.

These systems of moral theology are of fairly recent origin within the church. However, the needs they were devised to fill have always existed. Frequently a person is not certain whether a particular course of action is lawful or unlawful, forbidden or permitted. The "systems" were designed to help resolve such doubts. An example from early church history illustrates the problem and two contrasting solutions. The rigoristic, heretical sect of the Novatians claimed that second marriages (after the death of a spouse) were forbidden by the divine law. St. Gregory of Nazianzus wrote that they could be allowed since the prohibition was doubtful. (This would be a doubt of law. In a doubt of fact, such as whether the moving object in the bush was a deer or another hunter, one could not shoot until the doubt had been resolved.) There is an ancient adage, attributed to St. Augustine of Hippo: "*In fide, unitas; in dubiis, libertas; in omnibus, caritas.*" (In faith, unity; in doubtful matters, liberty; in all things, love.) Probabilism is based on the second phrase, "*in dubiis, libertas.*"

WHY DID A MORE rigoristic approach take over in the medieval period? As Häring points out, there was a radical change in the social context. "Many popes and bishops gave more time to administration in the temporal sphere than to the spiritual care of their flocks." This would help explain a strong tendency on the part of the hierarchy to emphasize law and order at the expense of concern for Christian liberty and the legitimate rights of individual conscience. In the conflict between law and order, on the one hand, and liberty and the rights of conscience, on the other, writers as prominent as St. Bonaventure and William of Auxerre resolved doubts in favor of the law.

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In 1577, Bartholomew Medina, O.P., laid the foundation for the moral system of probabilism when he wrote: "It seems to me that if there is a probable opinion, it is lawful to follow it, even though the opposite is more probable." This approach was soon accepted by many theologians, especially by the Jesuits, who adopted it as their official position. In reaction, Pope Alexander VII, in 1656, called upon the Dominicans to defend probabiliorism. For two centuries Catholic moral theology was embroiled in a battle between the supporters of these two systems, the Dominican probabiliorists and the Jesuit probabilists. As Häring writes: "Fundamentally, it concerned the tension between law, traditions, church authorities, and confessors on the one side and, on the other, the individual conscience." The resolution of the conflict between probabiliorists and probabilists and the general adoption of probabilism throughout the church was due largely to the influence of St. Alphonsus Liguori. Trained by a rigoristic probabiliorist of the Dominican order, his pastoral experience turned him toward the Jesuit probabilists. "After the suppression of the Society of Jesus, he continued in the same pattern, but in order to avoid too strong opposition from the mighty traditionalist wing, from then on he called his always moderate probabilism 'equiprobabilism.' " The influence of St. Alphonsus was greatly enhanced when he was declared a doctor of the church in 1871 and, later by Pius XII, made patron of confessors and moralists.

One limitation on the use of probabilism in the teaching of St. Alphonsus is the obligation to avoid serious harm to others. Häring, in his early work, *The Law of Christ,* gives examples where this limitation would prevent the use of a probable opinion: "If the life of our neighbor is liable to be imperiled by actions of ours, we must choose the safest course of action so as to avoid this evil effect. The physician, for example, is obliged to make use of the safest remedies possible. . . . War with its dire consequences may not be waged on the ground of probable right." For those of us who recognize the human reality of the unborn child and its consequent rights, the existence of a probable opinion justifying abortion on demand could not be followed; nor, *a fortiori,* infanticide, in the case of a hopelessly retarded newborn child. In such cases the serious rights of others are involved.

No matter what one's personal conviction in the controversy between probabilists and probabiliorists may be, every conscientious confessor must be a moderate probabilist in the sacrament of reconciliation. The degree to which probabilism has come into possession in the practice of the church can be illustrated by another quotation from *The Law Of Christ:* "In the tribunal of penance the confessor is never permitted to refuse absolution to any penitent who holds and follows an opinion proposed by prudent and learned moralists, even though the confessor himself looks upon it as false." Probabilism safeguards the individual in the exercise of his or her conscience from rigoristic confessors. Of it, Richard McCormick writes: "In broader perspective, probabilism — by what ever name it is called — remains a tribute to the claims of human freedom against all systems or ideologies which would attempt unduly to restrict this freedom. Furthermore, it has indirectly benefited the science of moral theology itself by preventing premature closure of difficult moral questions."

THIS BRINGS US BACK to the issue raised at the beginning of this article. Since there are reputable theologians who defend positions on moral issues contrary to the official teaching of the Roman magisterium and since in the accepted discipline of the church confessors must allow their penitents to follow such probable opinions, do not the Catholic faithful have the right to know of the existence of such options? And if this is true, is it not immoral to attempt to conceal such knowledge from the faithful, to present the official decisions, in Rahner's words, "as though there were no doubt whatever about their definitive correctness and as though further discussion about the matter by Catholic theologians would be inappropriate"?

The birth control issue illustrates the problem in an area of great practical concern to the laity. Many Catholic couples "find themselves in circumstances where at least temporarily the size of their families should not be increased" (*Constitution on the Church in the Modern World,* #51). To them Paul VI spoke with great firmness and clarity: "Each and every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life." In response to those who would allow the use of artificial contraception as the lesser of two evils in a conflict situation he wrote: "It is not licit, even for the gravest reasons, to do evil so that good may follow therefrom; that is, to make into the object of a positive act of the will something which is intrinsically disorder, and hence unworthy of the human person, even when the intention is to safeguard or promote individual, family or social well-being" (*Humanae Vitae,* #14).

Is this one of those open questions in moral theology to which Rahner alludes? Is there a sufficiently probable opinion contrary to the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* which the faithful may adopt in their own decisions in conscience?

Father Bernard Häring was a member of the commission set up by Pope Paul to study the birth control question. At Holy Cross Abbey in Cañon City, Colorado, shortly after the promulgation of *Humanae Vitae* Häring revealed some of the historical background of the encyclical. When, in the last session of Vatican Council II Cardinals Suenens, Alfrink, and Léger and Patriarch Maximos IV spoke out for means of contraception other than total or

"Someone's in luck. I skipped two commandments."

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periodic continence, their effort, according to Father Häring, "received the applause of the majority of the council." Pope Paul immediately removed the issue from the council. The pope, as Father Häring explained, then enlarged a small subcommission, previously set up by John XXIII,

> in order to study with frankness and liberty the whole problem of birth regulation, responsible parenthood. It was a commission of about sixty-five men, one-third priests and two-thirds laity. . . . However, the commission was set up, at least regarding the theologians, with all assurances for a conservative majority. There were three people, Bishop Reuss, Canon de Locht, and to a modest extent myself, who dared to speak out for new solutions. It was then the amazing event that at the end four-fifths of the priests, and almost one hundred per cent of the laity, came to the result that there is no essential difference between the calculated use of temperature-calendar tests in the periodical continence and more simple methods of birth regulation, as diaphragms or anti-fecundity pills.

Sixteen bishops, including seven cardinals, were added for the fifth and final session of the "Papal Commission on Population, the Family, and Natality" which met from April 13 to June 28, 1966. Of the fifteen actually taking part in the discussions nine reportedly favored the "majority" report which allowed the use of artificial means of contraception:

> Cardinals Julius Doepfner of Munich, Leo Josef Suenens of Malines-Brussels, Lawrence Shehan of Baltimore, and Joseph Lefebvre of Bourges, France; Archbishops John F. Dearden of Detroit, Jean Zoa of Cameroon, Jose Rafael Pulido Mendez, Merida, Venezuela, Claudius Dupuy of Albi, France, and Bishop Joseph Reuss, auxiliary of Mainz, Germany. Opponents were Cardinal Ottaviani, then head of the Holy Office; Archbishop Thomas Morris of Cashel, Ireland, and Bishop Carlo Colombo of the University of Milan. Reported as "doubtful" were Cardinals John Heenan of London and Valerian Gracias of Bombay and Archbishop Leo Binz of St. Paul. (*The Birth Control Debate*, ed. by Robert G. Hoyt, pp. 20-22.)

The level of dissent from *Humanae Vitae* is well known. Several episcopal conferences issued statements which clearly modified the papal position. Over six hundred theologians in the United States signed a dissenting statement.Twenty leading European theologians issued a dissenting statement from a meeting in Amsterdam, called expressly to comment on *Humane Vitae*.

The vast majority of American priests certainly accept this dissenting opinion as validly probable for use in the confessional. The NORC study of 1970, as reported in Andrew M. Greeley's *The American Catholic*, showed that: "Sixty percent of the priests do not think that all artificial contraception is wrong, and only twenty-nine percent are certain that it is wrong. . . . Only one quarter of the priests in the country in 1970 were willing to refuse absolution to those who would not promise to stop artificial contraception."

HOWEVER, THE ISSUE addressed here is not the reaction of the clergy, but what information and insights may be legitimately used by the faithful in the formation of their consciences. Birth control is a moral issue on which the papal teaching is clear and specific. Opposed to that teaching is a massive response of competent theologians. Equally significant is what had happened in the commission which the pope himself set up to study the issue. Among a group of theologians carefully chosen to reach a conservative conclusion, after thorough study a very large majority recommended a change in the church's teaching on birth control. Could the faithful, influenced by such facts as these, conclude that there is a highly probable opinion opposed to the pope's teaching which they could legitimately follow in conscience? "No" is the answer of those who contend that there can be no probable opinion opposed to a clear teaching of the Roman magisterium. That Rome subscribes to this position is well illustrated by a response from the Doctrinal Congregation, March 13, 1975, on the subject of sterilization. Recognizing the existence of dissent from the official position on the part of theologians, it then "denies that doctrinal significance can be attributed to the fact as such so as to constitute a 'theological source' which the faithful might invoke and thereby abandon the authentic magisterium, and follow the opinions of private theologians which dissent from it." According to this opinion, once the pope or a Roman congregation has taken an official position, there is no longer room for the legitimate doubt upon which probabilism is based.

Such a position can be maintained only if the Roman magisterium has never been in error in its authentic moral teaching. The list of moral questions on which the authentic teaching has changed is long. Defenders of a call for absolute obedience to all such teaching would hold that the doctrines taught were correct for their own time and circumstances, but that changed conditions and further enlightenment led to the formulation of new positions. Such a justification can hardly be applied to Pope St. Gregory the Great's condemnation of pleasure in marital intercourse, Innocent IV's teaching on witches and the use of torture in judicial interrogations, or Pius IX's, in *Quanta Cura*, condemning "that erroneous opinion which is especially injurious to the Catholic church and the salvation of souls, called by our predecessor Gregory XVI *deliramentum* (derangement), namely, that freedom of conscience and of worship is the proper right of each man, and that this should be proclaimed and asserted in every rightly constituted society."

Perhaps no clearer case of erroneous moral teaching can be cited than the authentic teaching of the Roman magisterium on slavery so ably documented by John Francis Maxwell ("The Development of Catholic Doctrine Concerning Slavery", *World Justice*, XI, December 1969 and March 1970; *Slavery in the Catholic Church*, London, 1975). It is true that the New Testament never explicitly condemns slavery, but neither on the other hand does it attempt to justify the institution. Paul's pastoral approach in *Philemon* and his statement in *Galatians* that in Christ there is neither slave nor free helped create the atmosphere in the West which led to the gradual elimination of

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slavery. Paul's apparent toleration of slavery in *I Cor. 7* had a less fortunate sequel. As Raymond Brown has pointed out:

> Paul has very little social teaching. Paul is a highly missionary writer and preacher and his basic idea is to get people to believe in Christ. He will deal only with social issues to the extent that they block his preaching. Otherwise he leaves them alone, even though he may not like them. He can basically let people stay slaves. If you are slaves, stay slaves. Why? Christ is coming soon. It doesn't make any difference. The really important thing is that you believe in Christ. Quite obviously in *Philemon* he would prefer that a person not be a slave. But still he's not going to wrestle with that problem. Christ is coming soon and that relativizes the evil social institutions of the time.

BUT CHRIST DID NOT come as Paul expected and the magisterium absolutized a message which Paul intended for a radically different situation. Paul's apparent toleration of an evil institution which was to end with the imminent coming of Christ would be used by the magisterium to justify its active support for slavery as an essential element in the structure of society. The local Council of Gangra in A.D. 340 anathematized those who taught slaves to despise their masters and withdraw from their service. Affirmed by Pope Martin I in 650, this decree became part of the Western church's collection of canons. In the meantime St. Augustine of Hippo began to develop the theological justification for slavery as the penalty for sin. In *De Civitate Dei,* XIX, 15, he wrote that "the state of slavery is understood to be a just imposition on the sinner. . . . The truth is that the penalty of slavery is imposed by law which ordains the preservation of the natural order and prohibits its disturbance." Centuries later St. Thomas Aquinas attempted to combine Augustine's justification of slavery as a penalty for sin with Aristotle's teaching that slavery is according to nature. He taught that

> slavery is contrary to the "first intention" of nature but not contrary to the "second intention" because . . . nature has the desire that everyone should be good; but in consequence of human sin nature also has the inclination to provide a penalty for sin; and so slavery was introduced as a penalty for sin. . . . Slavery is a definite particular punishment and is a matter of positive law and is derived from natural law as a precision of it. . . . Hence the state of slavery belongs to the "*jus gentium*," and to the natural law only in the second degree and not in the first.

Our concern is not so much with the teaching of the theologians as with the Roman magisterium, which accepted this theological justification in theory and in practice. The Ninth Council of Toledo in 655 attempted to enforce clerical celibacy by enacting that the penalty of enslavement be imposed on the offspring of offending clerics. This canon was later incorporated in general church law. Pope Urban II at the Synod of Melfi in 1089 imposed the penalty of enslavement on the wives of clerics who violated the law of celibacy. Pope Alexander III at Third Lateran in 1179 and Pope Innocent III at Fourth Lateran in 1215 authorized enslavement for captured Christians who had aided the Saracens. Pope Nicholas V in 1454 granted to King Alfonso V of Portugal and his son, Prince Henry the Navigator, "full and free permission . . . to capture, conquer and subjugate all Saracens and pagans whatsoever and other enemies of Christ . . . and to bring their persons into perpetual slavery." This permission the pope granted "by our Apostolic authority and from sure knowledge, from the plenitude of Apostolic power. . . ." Pope Paul III in 1548 "abrogated the privilege of the *conservatori* of Rome to emancipate slaves. . . ." For centuries theologians did not question the morality of slavery but only debated whether the firmly established teaching was *de fide* or merely theologically certain. As late as 1839, Gregory XVI's widely cited condemnation of the slave trade could be interpreted by the bishops in the southern United States as referring only to the transatlantic slave trade and not to domestic slavery. There is no record of an attempt to correct this interpretation.

In 1866, after slavery had been abolished in the United States and several Latin American countries, the Holy Office issued an instruction reaffirming the moral justification of slavery. According to this instruction, slavery, considered as such in its essential nature, is not contrary to the "natural and divine law, and there can be several just titles of slavery . . . it is not contrary to the divine law for a slave to be bought, sold, or given, provided that . . . due conditions are observed. . . ."

Even the apparent condemnation in 1888 by Leo XIII in his letter to the bishops of Brazil "is not at all the forthright condemnation of slavery that it might appear to be at first sight. For it is only a re-statement of the view held in the middle ages concerning the 'first intention' or 'first disposition' of nature under which slavery was forbidden, while under the later disposition of the '*jus gentium*' slavery became morally lawful." Three years later in *Rerum Novarum* Leo XIII finally took a position which, while not speaking of slavery by name, made it clear that slavery was incompatible with universal and fundamental human rights. He wrote that human labor is "personal since the active force inherent in the person cannot be the property of anyone other than the person who exerts it, and it was given to him in the first place by nature for his own benefit." The erroneous doctrine so firmly held and promulgated by the Roman magisterium for so many centuries was finally corrected by the Roman magisterium in 1891.

WHEN THERE IS CONFLICT between the "authentic magisterium" and "the opinions of private theologians which dissent from it" how do we determine whether the private theologians are indeed "prudent and learned"? I suggest that the criteria should be those used to judge the competence of scholars in other intellectual disciplines: economists, sociologists, biologists, physicists, etc. How do they rank with their peers? Are their articles and books taken seriously? How reputable are the schools in which they teach?

Is there any way to protect the faithful from the often eccentric (off center) opinions of pop moralists who are able to

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gain attention and apparent credibility through the media? Only by giving the faithful convincing reasons for rejecting what we hold to be false ideas. But we must be on our guard. Today's "pop moralist" may be a prophet. On the slavery issue there weren't even pop theologians, only Quakers and other so-called heretical sectarians. Supporting the morality of slavery right down to the middle of the present century were some of the greatest names in the then accepted moral theology, Lehmkuhl, Prümmer, Merkelbach, Génicot, and Father Zalba, the latter being one of the four theologians on the "birth control commission" who voted against change in the church's teaching on birth control and who continued to justify the morality of slavery as late as 1958. The history of moral theology provides ample reason for modesty on the part of all who teach on moral issues.

In our day there is serious dissent by competent theologians from the authentic teaching of the Roman magisterium on several moral issues. Contrary to the response of the Doctrinal Congregation on the sterilization question, not only should such dissent constitute a "theological source" for confessors, it should also be a valid and available source for the faithful in the formation of their consciences. Speaking at Holy Cross Abbey of those who had difficulty with the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* Father Häring said: "Those who are doubtful whether they can accept it have to study it thoroughly, have to read it with good will, but they also have to accept other information in the church. They cannot dissociate the pope from the whole of the church. They have to study it, consider it, but not alone, not isolated."

The faithful have a right to that "other information" for the formation of their consciences. To deny that right is objectively immoral. The system of probabilism is not a favor granted to the church by a benevolent ruler but a hard-won victory of the forces of compassion over a rigoristic authority. It will be said that this attempt to close the ranks by imposing doubtful teaching is done in good faith for the honor of God and the preservation of holy church. This is the same good faith which produced the *Syllabus of Errors* of Pius IX, the biblical decrees at the time of St. Pius X, the silencing of scholars like Teilhard de Chardin, John Courtney Murray, Yves Congar, to mention a few recent examples. Yet the harm done by the decisions on moral issues seems to be of a different order: the imposition of excessive moral burdens on those trying to please God; the guilt of those unable to meet the rigorous demands of what are essentially doubtful laws; the estrangement of many from the church; the loss of credibility in a magisterium to which the faithful should be able to listen with reverent confidence. In our day of massive communications and a well-educated laity, only a voice which is recognized as completely open and honest will be trusted.

YOU'D BETTER GET READY—FOR DISAPPOINTMENT

Open letter to Republican conservatives

ALAN WOLFE

TO YOU WHO ARE ABOUT to be disappointed, my sympathies. I watched you as you gathered in Detroit. I saw that look of anticipation in your faces. You worked long and hard to have your man nominated. You quite rightly look forward to your reward. Alas, you will not be able to claim it. Ronald Reagan will be as much a letdown to you as John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson were to me. Since you will soon be joining me out here in the cold of political exile, let me do what I can to smooth your path.

The sixties were proclaimed to be my time, just as the eighties are said to be yours, and by the same media. (You, as I recall, hated the media then, and I must say that I am not particularly fond of them now.) Twenty years ago, the left was the cutting edge—I think that is what they called it—of the future. Radicals like myself were the grease that lubricated the political machine. We took the risks, raised the issues, supplied the energy. I remember going South in the early 1960s, before civil rights was a popular cause, to do what I thought was right, and it still amazes me to recall the rush when an American president, and his brother, the attorney general, seemed to take our cause as their own. We felt that we were defining the terms of the political discourse in those days, and in a sense, we were. For we established the ideals that a generation of politicians would set out to betray, just as you are currently setting the standards which the political system will never reach.

For us, the goals were clear: greater equality, social justice, and world peace. These were, we thought, America personified, history with a little push. There was no question that our objectives would be reached; the only controversy seemed to be over the proper speed. (We were in a hurry.) We never understood that the moment of our triumph was the start of our demise. As the liberals we elected began almost immediately to wage war and to appease injustice, we felt violated, fodder

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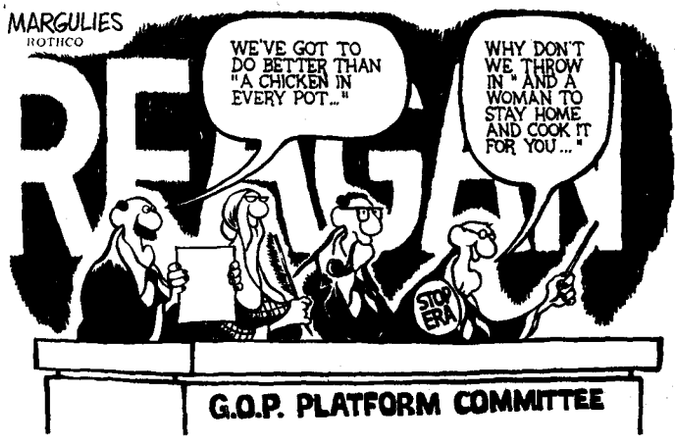
for the ambitions of cynical men. Betrayal turned into anger, and some took to the streets in rage. Older, and need I say wiser, we now look back on our naïveté and wonder how we ever expected otherwise. Except that we see you doing the same thing. Innocence is the monopoly of no one political tendency.

I read the platform you adopted in Detroit, and I wonder who is kidding whom. Either you believe this document or you do not, and while I hope you do not, I suspect that you do. If so, you have become as utopian in your thinking as we were in ours. However meaningful the platform may have been in expressing your anger, it bears as much relationship to the economic realities of the 1980s as the Port Huron Statement bore to the political realities of the 1960s. You want to take government out of the economy, meanwhile lowering taxes and prices. You want greater security against external challenges. And you crave to return to a past when the "simple verities" were actually believed. Those are all goals that I can understand, even if I disagree with them. The problem is that the president you elect will not even make an attempt to achieve them, leaving you with a few symbols and even fewer crumbs, hoping to appease you the way our presidents tried to "cool out" the radical left.

"Democratic party of domination of the body politic . . . has produced a central government of vastly expanded size, scope, and rigidity. Confidence in government, expecially big government, has been the chief casualty of too many promises made and broken, too many commitments unkept. It is time for a change . . ." There can be no doubt that our government is big, even though it ranks among the smallest in the modern world in terms of the percentage of the GNP that it annually eats. To reduce its size, you will need to be somewhat more judicious in explaining its growth. Government did not expand because of liberal good intentions, even though to believe this is a matter of faith with you. It grew because our economy is dominated by powerful economic constellations that wanted protection against the market, and now that the economy is in decline, they will demand even more. Will Ronald Reagan, a man so cozy in the board rooms of General Electric, be willing to take on his former employer in a bitter struggle for power, as he would have to do to satisfy your dream of getting government out of the economy? (Let us remember how uncomfortable the folks at G.E. were when, to their amazement, they discovered that Reagan actually *believed* the speeches he was delivering for the company). My guess is that, above all else, Reagan wants a little peace and quiet, and in America, we have perfected a mechanism that provides this sort of thing. It is called big government. Every president in this century has learned that the easiest way to govern America is to let the big corporations do what they want, and what they want is to have the state loosen up the market and limit the market to whatever degree suits their purpose. If he does not know this already, your man will know it soon enough, especially if he is untoward enough to unleash Milton Friedman on the "private" sector.


MARGULIES
ROTHCO
WE'VE GOT TO DO BETTER THAN "A CHICKEN IN EVERY POT..."
WHY DON'T WE THROW IN "AND A WOMAN TO STAY HOME AND COOK IT FOR YOU..."
STOP ERA
G.O.P. PLATFORM COMMITTEE

YOU ALSO SEEM TO feel—it says so right in your platform—that big government causes inflation. You are promised lower prices, which is a dangerous business these days. Your ideological sister, Mrs. Thatcher, made such a promise, and she even imported some of your very own economists to help her carry it out. Unfortunately for her, inflation has gone haywire since she became prime minister and productivity is not doing any better. (As one who listened to endless references to our English friends as proof of the fallacy of good intentions, I cannot resist the temptation to use the same country to point out the limits of monetarism, as Mr. Von Hayek recently did in a scathing criticism of Mr. Friedman). Mrs. Thatcher wants to be liked by men of wealth and standing, and it remains the case, whether the money supply be high or low, that corporations protected from the market can raise prices at will. The more Mr. Reagan wins support at Exxon and Cargil, the higher will be the price of oil and bread. To ease your discomfort as prices go through the roof under Mr. Reagan, you will be able to read a study by a U.C.L.A. economist who will convincingly show that conservative inflation is less harmful than liberal inflation.

There is much to be said for your plea to "de-emphasize big bureaucracies" and to "shift the focus of national politics from expanding government's power to that of restoring the strength of small communities, such as the family, the neighborhood, and the workplace." These words, in fact, sound as if they are copied from the New Left's vision of participatory democracy. I would love to see you slay the dragon of bureaucracy, but you are trying to elect a very peculiar St. George. While the first half of your platform is a plea against big government the second half calls for the single largest commitment to a big goverment bureaucracy ever contained in any party platform in American history. Were Mr. Reagan to carry out your program for national defense, he would destroy single-handedly your program for inflation and low taxes. If he listens to the tax-cutter in you, he will be unable to respond to the patriot. Either way you slice it, you are going to be very unhappy. You have to choose between your conception of economics and your conception of national security, but heady with the dream of coming to power, you don't want to think unpleasant thoughts.

We also had contradictory goals back in the sixties. We

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thought that we could win programs that would eliminate injustice and inequality,, all the time without a fundamental restructuring of American society. Until we learned better, we put our faith in economic growth as the magic cure-all that would enable us to avoid the inconsistencies in our vision. Having learned that an attempt to expand the pie in no way avoids decisions about how it should be cut, it is disturbing to see you engaged in the same mistake. Your program in 1980 is the most pro-growth document in American politics since the Democratic party platform of 1960. You say that "nothing is more important to our nation's defense and social well-being than economic growth," but if your president expands the economy, he will also expand the problems that lie inside of it. You will find, as did we, that a flawed economy which doubles is an economy twice as problematic.

I know that you think these problems are not as severe as I make them out to be. Your economists tell you that a major tax cut will actually stimulate government revenue, for it will encourage business to invest and thereby raise the general level of prosperity. If this is meant to be an economic prediction, and not just a bit of demagogic mumbo-jumbo, then you will be in serious trouble. Expect lower taxes, if you wish. Anticipate a balanced budget. Hope for far higher spending on defense. You can do any of these things. But please don't do all of them. To the extent that you refuse to choose between contradictory objectives, to that degree at least half of your dreams will upset you.

Actually, you will be lucky to get half. Let us suppose that both you and your president are more patriotic than penny-wise. Committed to satisfying your urge to make America the number one military power in the world, Mr. Reagan chooses to put aside—for a time, of course—thirty percent tax cuts and balanced budgets. You decide to go along with him, so anxious are you to restore "the position of military superiority that the American people demand." Not only would the size of government mushroom, but there is also ample evidence that the offered superiority would not be delivered. What makes you so sure that a government which you gleefully describe as incapable of delivering the mail will not have trouble invading other countries? Were the promises in your platform for every new weapons system on the drawing boards carried out, you would find yourself with the worst of two worlds: big government, and little to show for it.

AMERICA HAS LOST POWER—you are right to point this out. But as was the case with domestic policy, it has fallen into trouble by following the very programs that, in your opinion, will restore its untroubled status. I know you think that Russia has expanded into the world's power vacuum, but the real winners have been Germany and Japan. (Western Europe and Japan combined now constitute the largest capitalist power in the world.) These countries are aware of a little secret that has escaped America's consciousness, and also seems to have passed by you: military spending leads to decline. Not hampered by the costs of meeting the voracious appetite of one of the most unproductive and inefficient sectors of the economy, Germany and Japan have an industrial structure that is innovative, export-oriented, and not hyper-inflationary. Fighting a strategic battle with Russia, America will lose the economic war with its allies.

Should Mr. Reagan come to power, the contradictions in your foreign policy prescriptions would become glaringly apparent. Spending more on defense will result in a decline of exports and a further weakening of the dollar, encouraging France and Germany, not only to solidify their monetary union, but to seek their own detente with the Soviet Union. Anti-Communism is a passion with you, but the world organizes itself through power blocs, not ideologies. Mr. Reagan can, if he chooses, try to make you happy by patching things up with Taiwan, but this will force the Russians and Chinese into an alliance that neither wants. Will you be prepared when Reagan follows Nixon to Peking or when the Soviet Union invades another country and America is unable to stop it? The world looks different from Wall Street and Washington than from Phoenix and San Diego. You despise Mr. Kissinger (we agree, at least, on that), but his spirit will dominate the Reagan administration within a year, even if his body does not. The genuine anti-Communists among you, like Mr. Van Cleave, will end up having the same influence in a Reagan administration as Mr. Vance had with Carter. Foreign policy is for the cynical. Brzezinski and Kissinger are; you and I are not.

In fact, you seem to have inherited the romanticism that plagued the New Left. The nostalgia that dominates your program, like the Luddism that dominated ours, reminds me of the poetic resistance to the industrial revolution in nineteenth century England. Mr. Reagan shares your romanticism, and when he speaks to you, I hear the strains of Methodist revivalism in modern form. There is, let me assure you, nothing wrong with being romantic—we remember Coleridge and have forgotten his prime minister. The only problem is that men like Cobbett and Wordsworth did not expect to elect one of their own to be chief of state, whereas you do. Again, you are setting yourselves up for disappointment, for America is in anything but an idyllic phase.

There are sections of your platform that approach the eloquent in calling for an America that no longer exists. And yet for disbelievers in government, you display a puzzling faith that the election of a new president can stop the world from changing. I sense a contradiction in your worldview between your traditionalism and your dynamism. You want developers to develop, auto-makers to make autos, and polluters to be free to pollute. But you also want neighborhoods to be stable and regions to preserve their distinctive character. Let Mr. Reagan unleash the energy companies and watch what happens to your beloved West. You will be able to drive there at any speed you want, but you may not care to. Give agribusiness a free hand, and find yourselves without water to drink. See Ray Kroc become Secretary of Agriculture, and recall longingly the days when Americans ate at the dinner table. Protesting all the time against modernity, Reagan will speed the destruction of the traditions you claim to love. So

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frustrated and angry will you become that you will conclude that your president is no longer to be trusted, and you will be tempted to search for an alternative who will destroy your values even more ruthlessly.

The New Left was victimized by the very economic conditions that brought it into existence. The very prosperity that gave us our radicalism also created a mushy liberalism that took the bite out of our critique. You will be victimized by economic circumstances as well, but this time in the opposite direction. Decline and austerity give you your present popularity, building popular support for your program and principles. Yet the same austerity that adds strength to your vision will produce a mushy conservatism that will sap it. As he becomes more dependent on the very forces responsible for America's mess, Mr. Reagan, in the guise of cleaning things up, will dirty them even more. You expect him to be the sheriff in *High Noon*; you will find him to be the outlaw.

There is something quaint in your beliefs; they remind me of the time when I believed that electing the right men to follow the right policies would change the world to my liking. The problem all along was that the men we elected and the policies they followed had little power to change the world. Power in America lies, not in the accountable institutions the voters can reach, but in the unaccountable ones which they cannot. Your faith and passion are charming, but your sense of reality is distorted. Ronald Reagan wants to be president. For that very reason he will disappoint you. When he does, remember that out here beyond the "mainstream," there are plenty of people who have already been through what you are about to experience.

JOHN ANDERSON IS THE NEW YANKEE CANDIDATE

The establishment alternative

MARY MEEHAN

THOSE STAUNCH SUPPORTERS of the two-party system who worry about John Anderson should relax. Far from being a major threat to the system, Anderson is another staunch supporter. He thinks that the system has gone astray this once, by neglecting to choose him as the Republican nominee. Not to worry: everything can be put right with an end-run. In the unlikely event that John B. is elected president, he will have a "national unity" administration. Anyone who looks closely at the people around Anderson may suspect that it will look strangely like the Carter administration. It will have more Republicans, perhaps; but the general murky ideology will not change very much.

It is curious that Anderson's late-April announcement of his switch to an independent candidacy has received so little analysis. Anderson went out of his way to stress "I have been a member of the Republican party for thirty years" and "I will continue my membership in that party." He presented his independent candidacy, not as an assault on the two-party system, but simply as an alternative to the presidential candidates the system is coughing up this year.

In an interview published in the May 19 issue of *U.S. News & World Report,* Anderson suggested that "my candidacy can breathe new life into the two parties. I think it can help to strengthen that system — not destroy it." After his late-July meeting with Senator Edward Kennedy, Anderson hinted that he might drop out of the race if Kennedy were to win the Democratic nomination. At that time, Anderson remarked: "I am running not because I am attacking the two-party system but because I am attacking the nominating process. . . ."

So there it is: a one-time venture which is supposed to "breathe new life into the two parties" and to strengthen the two-party system. It is possible, of course, that Anderson may damage that system in spite of himself; but no one should count on this. He may instead help save the system by providing a sort of safety valve for discontented voters. He is already distracting them from more radical alternatives, such as the Libertarian party, the Citizens party, and the socialist parties.

In talking last spring with a founder and leading activist of the Libertarian party, I referred to Anderson as "a profoundly establishment candidate." He agreed, saying that the establishment "is playing Anderson up precisely because he is no threat to the establishment." He said that Anderson serves as a lightning rod for voter discontent. He guessed the subconscious thought of establishment leaders to be: "Here is a guy who represents all that has been going on, whom we can palm off" to dissatisfied voters as a solution to what has been going on. The Libertarian did not think there was any conspiracy to push Anderson; he thought that it was simply a natural expression of subconscious, status-quo thinking.

Media coverage of the Anderson campaign has been overwhelming in volume and underwhelming in critical depth. It is in striking contrast to the national media blackout of Eugene McCarthy's independent presidential campaign in 1976.

MARY MEEHAN, *a Washington-based writer whose work has appeared in* Inquiry, The Nation, The Washington Post, *and other journals, served as director of state organizations in the '76 McCarthy campaign.*

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Americans nowadays do not believe something is happening unless they see it on the tube. Consequently, volunteers out petitioning for McCarthy in the summer of '76 kept hearing, "Oh, is he running this year?" and "Does McCarthy know you're doing this?" If one considers only the political track records of the two candidates, McCarthy should have received more media attention than Anderson — not less. McCarthy had served twenty-two years in Congress and had been elected twice to the Senate. Anderson has never won any race outside of his own congressional district. McCarthy had been a major contender in the 1968 presidential campaign. he had competed with Lyndon Johnson, Hubert Humphrey, and Robert Kennedy; had won primaries in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Oregon, and New York; and had come close to winning New Hampshire and California. Anderson, running for president for the first time in 1980, lost every primary he contested.

Anderson has three advantages in his favor this year. First, he is an incumbent; McCarthy was not in 1976. Second, he ran first as a major-party candidate, thereby gaining press coverage and federal matching funds that were denied McCarthy in 1976. Third, and possibly most important, he has made it clear that he is not trying to overthrow the two-party system. McCarthy, by contrast, made the two-party system a major target of his campaign. While Anderson once suggested that he might quit if it became clear that his campaign would result in Jimmy Carter's losing the election, McCarthy said that he would not "lose an hour's sleep" if Carter lost because of him. He said that the difference between Carter and Ford "is so insignificant that I have no burden of conscience at all." McCarthy declared that "we have had a *bipartisan* economic policy and *bipartisan* economic failure." He also said that "we have had *bipartisan* militarism in this nation. The Republicans contributed more of the ideas, and the Democrats more of the arms. I don't know who is to be blamed most."

McCarthy talk is the kind of thing that makes the establishment — including the media — rather nervous. Anderson talk is the kind that soothes establishment nerves and flatters establishment egos. Anyone who wonders about the difference in media treatment of the two candidates need not look much further than this. Anderson is a "safe" independent candidate.

Anderson is not, of course, the only candidate running outside of the major parties this year. Ed Clark, the Libertarian party's presidential candidate, started early and is well-organized and well-financed. He will be on the ballot in all fifty states and the District of Columbia this year. Barry Commoner, standard bearer for the new Citizens party, will not do as well in ballot placement. Nor will David McReynolds, presidential candidate of the Socialist Party U.S.A.; nor Andrew Pulley, who heads the ticket of the Socialist Workers party; nor Ellen McCormack, the liberal pro-life candidate who is running as an independent. But most of these candidates — unlike Anderson — are offering radical solutions for what ails the country. They deserve a forum, but they seem unlikely to have one as long as the media are diverted by Anderson — or are using Anderson as an excuse to avoid covering the others.

Incidentally, minor-party activists view Anderson unkindly because of his vocal role as a supporter of the 1974 Federal Election Campaign Act. That law discriminates severely against minority parties, independent candidates, and all candidates who run against incumbents. David A. Keene, a conservative who put together the left/right coalition which challenged the law in 1975, recently commented: "By the way, I have been reading about poor John Anderson and the plight of third-party candidates under the federal election laws, without any mention of the fact that John Anderson was the guy who was chiefly responsible in the House for writing the damn law that he's now complaining about. . . ." Keene said that Anderson is "getting, to some extent, what he deserves."

DESPITE the restrictions of the election law, however, Anderson is receiving establishment support that other candidates outside the major parties cannot hope to touch. Borrowing from Carl Oglesby's "Cowboys vs. Yankees" thesis about power in America, one might suggest that Reagan is a pure Cowboy, Carter a Yankee-on-trial who hasn't worked out, and Anderson the new Yankee candidate. It would be unwise to push this analogy too far, because Anderson clearly needs far more establishment support than he now has if he is to have a chance of winning. But he has received much support from people who clearly belong to the Yankee group of old-money, multinational, Europe-first, vaguely "reformist" folks. In Anderson's financial reports for the first six months of 1980, you can find the names of William Bundy, Marshall Field, Nicholas Katzenbach, Charles Percy, Blanchette Rockefeller, Laurance Rockefeller, Margaret Rockefeller, Mary Rockefeller, Iphigene Ochs Sulzberger, John Hay Whitney. And one George Franklin, Coordinator of the Trilateral Commission — of which Anderson is a member. Even when you add to this group the millionaires-with-social-consciences who have aided Anderson's campaign (Norman Lear, Stewart Mott, Max Palevsky, Anne and Martin Peretz, Betty and Stanley Sheinbaum), you are still far from the ramparts.

Of the special-interest groups contributing to Anderson's campaign, the pro-abortion forces stand out prominently. The National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL) has given up to its legal limit of $10,000. The early-June NARAL convention in Washington, where socialite Robin Chandler Duke presented $5,000 of this to a campaign official, seemed like an Anderson rally. Population-controllers show up frequently on Anderson's financial reports (the Rockefellers, some of the other millionaries, and folks from Planned Parenthood, Zero Population Growth, the Population Crisis Committee). You can also find there Hugh Hefner of the pro-abortion *Playboy* empire, the administrator of a large abortion clinic in Pittsburgh, the medical director of an abortion clinic in Anderson's hometown, and the leading abortion doctor of South Dakota. These people *should* give to Anderson. He's the best friend their industry has. Anderson's support of abortion, and the abortion industry's support of him, dovetails nicely with his essentially status-quo position.

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Some people on the left find encouragement in recent Anderson statements on foreign and military policies. Perhaps they should take a closer look. Did Anderson advance the cause of peace when he went to Israel in July and encouraged the hawkish Begin government in its positions on the West Bank settlements and Jerusalem? Anderson says that he favors negotiations leading to peace between Israel and its neighbors, but it is hard to see what there is to negotiate if such major issues are to be settled by Israeli fiat.

Anderson has made effective criticisms of Ronald Regan's military views, as when he recently spoke of Reagan's "clanking in his suit of heavy armor." That doesn't mean, however, that Anderson himself isn't also fairly well-armored, after the fashion of middle-of-the-road establishmenterians. Although he voted against the B-1 bomber, he wants to "continue existing researchon a new cost-effective bomber capable of launching cruise missiles." Anderson is fond of cost-effectiveness; like Eisenhower, he belongs to the "more bang for the buck" school. He opposes the MX missile system partly because "there is reason to believe that the Russians can counter the system more cheaply than we can build it." He speaks vaguely of devising a more "cost-effective solution to the threat posed to our land-based missiles," suggesting that arms control agreements may be one solution.

But Anderson is not carried away by the idea of arms control—much less by genuine disarmament. In a speech prepared for a Minneapolis appearance in August, he said that "we must face the fact that over the past fifteen years the Soviet Union has engaged in a massive arms buildup." True enough. But after the Vietnam war and the introduction of multiple-warhead missiles, cruise missiles, an the Trident submarine, some of us have the idea that the U.S. has also

engaged in a massive arms buildup. Anderson does not say this. He supports cruise missiles, and he thinks that we should "move ahead as swiftly as possible with the Trident submarine."

When one examines Anderson's other issue positions, it is hard to see what attracts the anti-Carterites and the anti-Reaganites. Anderson at one time supported Kemp-Roth, but now opposes Reagan's version of it. He supports a balanced budget, but not a constitutional amendment to require it. He has long been a friend of the nuclear power industry. His record on labor issues is such that AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland, when asked whether his group might back Anderson, responded: "Holy God, no." Although Anderson's newly acquired running mate, Patrick Lucey, has many friends in organized labor, it is doubtful that Lucey can overcome labor's aversion to the top of the ticket. Anderson no longer supports his "Jesus Amendment"; he does support the Equal Rights Amendment. (Welcome to the twentieth century!) He turned against the Vietnam war when the war was nearly over. He has changed his positions on so many issues that one might say of him, as people say of Chicago weather, "If you don't like it, just wait a minute." The only problem is: What will he say and do next year?

Screen

FLYING HIGH
AND AT BARGAIN RATES

AIRPLANE! is one of the least expensive, most successful films of the summer. *The Blues Brothers* is among the season's most expensive and, so far, unprofitable. Yet the two films have a lot in common, not least of all their common origin in a third feature called *Kentucky Fried Movie*, which was released in 1977. It's a typical Hollywood success story—rags to riches, and maybe back to rags again. *Kentucky Fried Movie* was the dream of three star-struck kids from Milwaukee who came to the West Coast in the early seventies to break into the movie business. These three, Jim Abrahams and Jerry and David Zucker, opened their own movie theater, a repertory house which specialized in the sort of old movies they thought funny and which became a gathering place for film cultists. They called their theater the "Kentucky Fried Theater," and out of its success came an opportunity to make a *Kentucky Fried Movie* of their own. They teamed up with a young producer, Robert Weiss, and a director, John Landis, whose only credit had been a $60,000 parody of monster movies done when he was twenty-one.

Since *Kentucky Fried Movie*'s budget was only ten times that amount — still a frayed shoestring by Hollywood standards — Landis's talent for economy was essential. The movie that he, Abrahams, and the Zuckers created is a series of loosely connected vignettes taking off on different aspects of American mass culture, especially TV. Typical is a scene where a Hari Krishna group wraps up a day of chanting and pestering people on the street, and heads for the neighborhood

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bar to enjoy "Miller Time." This is pretty light stuff, not far removed from the TV fare it pokes fun at. But it doesn't try to be anything more. It has good pace and a mood of nutty high jinks that's infectious. Its satire is warm-blooded, more a kind of antic consumerism than anti-consumerism. This is the same sense of humor that *Airplane!* has, which isn't surprising since Abrahams and the Zuckers made it, too.

Airplane! is a pastiche of visual puns, one-liners, sight gags, running gags, and slapstick, all of it based on familiar allusions to TV and other movies. At one point, for instance, a housewife who has just recited a Yuban commercial a few scenes earlier becomes hysterical. Another passenger on the plane begins shaking her to bring her back to her senses, but does it so violently that he appears to have lost his own senses instead. Seeing this, a third passenger steps in to push him aside and calm the woman, but then this interloper loses control even more and begins slapping her. As the camera pulls back we see that a long line is forming, each passenger carrying a more lethal weapon than the one in front of him and all together turning the action into a momentary reprise of *Murder on the Orient Express*.

The humor in these gags is inseparable from their mildness. It is by sticking close to whatever is satirized, by playing it straight, that the movie gets a laugh out of us. This approach is true to the philosophy which guided programming at the Kentucky Fried Theater. *Airplane!* is an adaptation of a movie that was no doubt shown at the theater at some point, a 1956 feature entitled *Zero Hour*. This is precisely the sort of movie that Abrahams and the Zuckers found hilarious, an old action flick just the way it comes, straight out of the can. The story of an ex-fighter pilot who has to take over the controls of a passenger flight when the crew gets food poisoning, *Zero Hour* was written by Arthur Hailey, whose later, more successful *Airport* series is another of *Airplane!*'s targets. (Hailey must have had an intuition that *Zero Hour* could come back to haunt him. He doesn't appear in *Airplane!*'s credits because his 1956 contract stipulated that his name was not to appear on any remake!)

Abrahams and the Zuckers felt so strongly that their remake of *Zero Hour* must be deadpan to be funny, they turned down one chance to do the film because the company putting up the money wanted to use established comedians like Bill Bixby and Dom Deluise. Abrahams and the Zuckers held out until they found a company that would agree to use serious actors who were either unknowns or old TV stars like Peter (*Mission Impossible*) Graves and Lloyd (*Sea Hunt*) Bridges. The resulting movie, as producer Jon Davison has pointed out, "is probably the most slavish remake ever done. Except for the jokes, every line of dialogue and every camera angle is the same." The argument the moviemakers were able to use to get their way about the casting, of course, was that such talent is cheaper than movie comics with big reputations. In this parsimony they were, again, only being true to their success with *Kentucky Fried Movie*.

As a matter of fact, *Airplane!* began as a production by doing something really unheard of in Hollywood: reducing its budget. The deal which Abrahams and the Zuckers wanted was finally made at Paramount, where producer Davison, a man with vast experience in working cheap, was assigned to the project. For four years Davison had worked at New World Pictures as production chief for the undisputed king of Poverty Row, Roger Corman. Corman has made two hundred quickies in the last twenty years, almost all of them profitable, and half the movers and shakers in Hollywood today — Francis Ford Coppola, Peter Bogdanovich, Jack Nicholson, et al. — broke into pictures by letting Corman exploit them at salaries way below scale. As a protégé of Corman's, Davison had learned how to keep costs down. Among his credits was *Hollywood Boulevard*, made in ten days in 1976 for $50,000. "It was a bet I made over lunch with Roger," explains Davison. "The movie earned $50,000 for the Spanish rights alone, so the production cost was covered by Spain." As soon as he saw Paramount's budget for *Airplane!*, Davison thought it was too high. He says that the studio "first budgeted *Airplane!* at $8 million. They said that the last disaster spoof, Columbia's *The Big Bus*, had cost seven, and they added a million for inflation." Davison, Abrahams, and the Zuckers brought in *Airplane!* for $3.4 million, less than half the original estimate.

This makes the contrast between *Airplane!* and *The Blues Brothers* a really killing one, even though the public is unaware of it. Indeed, the fact that the public doesn't see much difference between the two films is the source of the problem. At the peak of their earning power, which is a very short period of time the way films are marketed today, *Airplane!* and *The Blues Brothers* were each grossing about $1 million a day. Roughly equal numbers of moviegoers were attending each. Yet to the people in the movie industry itself, the two pictures are hardly equatable since there was a $28.6 million difference in what they cost to make. To *The Blues Brothers*' $32 million in production expenses you can probably add another $8 million for advertising and promotion, thus bringing the total to a neat, round $40 million. That's what it has cost for *The Blues Brothers* to stay even with *Airplane!* at the box office.

The rule of thumb in the movie industry is that a picture has to gross two to three times its original cost to show a profit. This means that *Airplane!* went into the black as soon as it passed the $10 million mark, which it did within a couple of weeks of its release. It is therefore one of the smash hits of the year. *The Blues Brothers* is one of the more disappointing films of the year. It needs to earn $80 or $90 million to become profitable, and its director and stars won't actually begin to get a percentage until $100 million. What gives the contrast its special irony is that *The Blues Brothers* was made by the producer-director team of Weiss and Landis, the very same that collaborated with Abrahams and the Zuckers on *Kentucky Fried Movie*.

There's a message for the movie industry in the difference between *Airplane!* and *The Blue Brothers*, though it's a message to which that industry has proven remarkably deaf in the past. (*The first of two parts.*)

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

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Books: DISTRIBUTING THE LOSSES

THE ZERO-SUM SOCIETY
DISTRIBUTION AND THE POSSIBILITIES FOR ECONOMIC CHANGE

Lester C. Thurow

Basic Books, $12.95, 230 pp.

Daniel M. Murtaugh

SEVERAL issues ago, Mary Gordon suggested that the main function of a review is to bring to readers' attention the books they really should read. I will take her suggestion and say right away that you should read this book. It clarifies our present economic malaise and its sources, and clarification is helpful and bracing even if the news is bad.

The news here is mixed. The good news is that none of our problems is insoluble. The bad news is that some of us will have to pay more than others for any of the available solutions. This is because our economy has a large "zero-sum" component. That means that your gain inevitably means my loss, or (as I would prefer, despite my kind feelings toward you) vice versa. Plus one for you, minus one for me sums to zero.

The discouraging task for a leader in this situation is to allocate losses. Triage is not a job one would choose under any circumstances, but it is particularly onerous if you are worried about being elected (or re-elected). Hence the tendency to duck the choice and perpetuate the problem the choice addresses.

One evasive maneuver has been to take refuge in the notion that problems of inequitable distribution can be solved by simple growth of the economy. Quarrels about how one cuts the economic pie will die away as the pie gets bigger, according to this theory. But now the limits to growth seem to deny us this remedy. Lester Thurow argues, in fact, that the remedy was always illusory because it assumed that people defined their economic well-being in absolute terms, that is, that they would be happy if their real income went up significantly over the years (as it has). The evidence suggests, indeed, that people define economic well-being relatively. They ask how their income compares with their contemporaries'. Expanding the pie offers them no comfort. So the quarrels over who gets what today reflect not simply diminished growth but expanded and more highly organized participation in the quarrels. Those who kept quiet before (e.g., blacks) now are speaking up and demanding their share.

Thurow pursues the theme of the zero-sum game through all the areas that most trouble us: energy, inflation, low productivity, the environment, and government regulation. The struggle over energy is between most of us and the top quintile of society which gets little of the pain and most of the profits from high-priced oil. High prices will eventually force a shift to new, more reliable sources of energy, and so (I tell myself) the hardship may be worth it. But then I see someone else making a bundle from my suffering, and that's not fair. That, of course, is the rule in a zero-sum game: minus lots for some mean plus lots for others.

So tax that windfall profit, I say. But in restoring fairness I take away the incentive to develop those new energy sources. All right, then, tax *some* of the windfall. But then the zero-sum game simply shifts to the middle and lower quintiles, because I haven't taken enough from the robber barons to restore full fairness. If I get a fair deal, then that means that you, my fellow struggler in the lower four-fifths, may have to do with something less. How do you feel about that?

So give up the windfall profits tax. (I am just about ready to say this, and that shows how remorselessly persuasive Thurow is.) The benefits to all of us will come, but very slowly. The benefits to the top quintile, and the suffering for most of us, will be here overnight. And so will the next election. Our elected representatives have small incentive to listen to the few of us who are very rich or very self-disciplined. Their fixation on the near term, a condition of their survival, means that the energy crisis is never seriously dealt with.

One of the most interesting points in Thurow's discussion of inflation is his contention that its principal bad effect is the sense of grievance it causes. Our real income has improved at about the same rate in the inflationary seventies as it did before 1965. And the distribution of income between rich and poor has not changed essentially (although that is largely due to government transfer payments to the poor that will not do the job much longer). Still, because our nominal income has grown so much faster in recent years, swollen with inflated dollars, we feel we are being robbed. The problem originates largely in our perceptions. Of course, politically, it is no less real for that.

In the course of his discussion of declining productivity, Thurow argues that we respond wrongly to the rough process by which productivity grows, namely, by the efficient participants in the zero-sum game driving out the inefficient. "We are extremely reluctant to practice this part of our economic religion," Thurow writes. "This reluctance has a real moral basis at the level of the individual (a failing individual is a starving individual), but it has no moral basis when it comes to firms. Yet if anything, we have more programs to protect institutions (all of course justified in the name of protecting individuals) than we do individuals." E.g., the Chrysler Corporation? Thurow suggests that disinvestment should be a planned and orderly function of central macro-economic planning, just as it is in well-run corporations (and here he has a good word for conglomerates, because their investment choices are so varied). As it is, too many of our scarce resources drift at random into the least productive areas of our economy.

Thurow's arguments on tax reform get to the heart of his concern with distribu-

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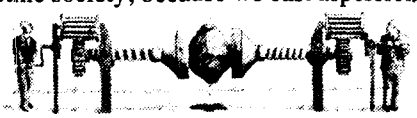
tion. The worst aspect of the present tax system is that it taxes equal incomes unequally. This leads to some surprising recommendations. For example, Thurow would do away with the corporate income tax. It fails the test of equity because it applies one tax rate to all the owners (stockholders) of the company even though their incomes vary widely. It also leads to distortions in the investment process. On the other hand, he would take away the special treatment for capital gains, again on equity grounds. Then again (Barry Goldwater, are you listening?), he favors a proportional rather than a progressive income tax once an equitable distribution of income is reached. He defines that as the distribution that presently obtains for fully employed white males. He produces some shocking numbers to show how far we are from achieving such distribution and so concludes that we must keep the progressive tax until something better than a palliative can be applied.

That something better is a commitment to full employment as a permanent public policy, with government employing those whom the private sector cannot accommodate Because we are a work ethic society, because we cast aspersions



on the "welfare" society, "we have a moral responsibility to guarantee full employment. Not to do so is like locking the church doors and then saying that people are not virtuous if they do not go to church."

This involves a fundamental restructuring of our economy, Thurow says, and I wish he was a little more detailed here. I wish he came up with some clearer estimates of the costs of such restructuring, as clear, perhaps, as his estimates of the costs of doing nothing. Also, I am not sure that a case cannot be made for special tax treatment of socially productive capital gains (e.g., not Krugerrands), even in the general terms of his own argument. Despite these reservations, I repeat: read this book. It is a remarkably full two hundred pages, and Thurow's arguments are better and tighter than my account of them.

Two sisters

THE CATHOLIC THING

Rosemary Haughton

Templegate, $8.95, 249 pp.

THE ANATOMY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Gerard Noel

Doubleday, $10.95, 288 pp.

Robert P. Imbelli

THE FIRST HALF of 1980 seems to presage a renewed exploration of Catholic identity and the Catholic way of imaging and engaging the world. Phenomena as distinct as John Paul's journeys and Richard McBrien's masterful compendium, *Catholicism*, might be invoked as cases in point. The two books under present review also seem animated by a similar quest. Here, however, the similarity ends. Rosemary Haughton's newest work is a profound and poetic meditation upon the Catholic vision and task; a book unique in its inspiration and utterly enthralling in its suggestiveness. Gerard Noel's book is informed journalism, well-intentioned and generous, but ultimately disappointing for its lack of analytical depth and overdrawn contrasts.

Like Matthew's scribe, Rosemary Haughton brings forth from her rich store things old and new which instruct, delight, provoke. Her book is a paean to "the Catholic thing," the celebration of and commitment to the human in the purifying light of the Gospel of God's love. She employs two fine images to guide her explorations. The first is "Mother Church" (what a more prosaic mind might call the structural, institutional component of the Catholic thing), whose most massive and majestic incarnation is the Roman Catholic church. The other guiding image is "Sophia," at once Wisdom and Romantic Love, Mysticism and Folly. (Again the prosaic commentator might see in Sophia the

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charismatic, incalculable component of the Catholic thing.)

What sets Rosemary Haughton's work apart is not only her pictorial skill in portraying these twin figures, not only her learned sensitivity that enables her to illustrate them amply by concrete historical reference, but, most especially, her theological depth which refuses to sunder the two sisters, often quarrelsome, yet ever needful of each other. This ability to see whole, this commitment to the whole of the truth, distinguishes Mrs. Haughton and makes her so apt not merely to expound, but almost to sacramentalize in her writing the Catholic reality she celebrates.

Appropriately, Mrs. Haughton tells her tale through the people whose stories spring from and expand the Catholic enterprise. There are the "clerks" who articulate the experience; and these constitute an astonishing array: from Augustine to Dorothy Day, from Heloise to von Hugel. Whatever their inevitable limitations, they strove for an integrity of vision, for the inclusion and transformation of the whole of the human. They embody, in the author's striking phrase, an "unrepentant earthiness." Yet their very participation in the Catholic enterprise fails to leave them unaffected. Paradoxically, "men and women involve themselves in the great enterprise, and serve it without being aware of the greatness of their service. It has the power to transform such service, and in so doing to transform the servant."

Moreover, such service is not restricted to the "clerks"; as befits a *Catholic* thing it resides in the people as a whole. No trace of elitism mars Rosemary Haughton's Catholic vision. The Catholic thing is popular in the most fundamental sense of the word; and, though it can degenerate into rank superstition and often needs reform, the sectarian spirit which would splinter Catholic unity is ultimately a greater threat to its integrity and well-being. Adapting Tillich's terms, Protestant reform ever requires Catholic substance. For, "it is the whole *Catholic* thing—saints and sinners, Popes and housewives, bigots and simpletons and scholars—all these who carry the message from one generation to another, the message which the great (and lesser) radicals recognize and revitalize. Such a method of transmission naturally scrambles the message at times, but it is because the thing is catholic in this sense, also, that it is worth revolutionizing."

Rosemary Haughton's sense of the Catholic thing stands, therefore, as a sustained plea for the fulness of human experience, the "both/and" of the Catholic imagination: "mystique" *and* "politique," orthodoxy *and* orthopraxis, transcendence *and* immanence. The Catholic thing rejects restriction. It supports a truly comprehensive anthropology, one which celebrates the multidimensional splendor of the human touched and transformed by God.

One last image helps organize Mrs. Haughton's reflections: the recent reconstruction of the medieval English church of York Minster. This remarkable enlistment of modern talents to preserve past treasures symbolizes the radical task that today presses upon those committed to the Catholic thing. Yet the task itself is eminently Catholic. For the genius of Catholicism is to be an enterprise which lives out of the past for the sake of the future, a future nourished by the past, but not reducible to it nor simply repetitive of it. York Minster represents that living tradition which gives both letter and custom birth, prolongs their existence, and, when necessary, radically reconstructs them.

The task of reconstruction constitutes the major theme of Gerard Noel's *The Anatomy of the Catholic Church*. Noel situates the pressing challenge in the context of the political and cultural revolution most manifest in the emergence of the third world and its radical demands for justice and a new economic order. The author's deeply concerned complaint is that the Roman Catholic church, faced with unparalleled possibilities, has hesitated to pursue its own prophetic vision, outlined at Vatican II and in the great social encyclicals of John XXIII and Paul VI. Instead, in this "time of transition verging on metamorphosis," Roman Catholicism, in its theology, its pastoral practice, and its missionary outreach, appears more adept at ecclesiastical fiddling than at revolutionary renewal.

One cannot gainsay the validity of Noel's impressions nor the legitimacy of the concern which chronicles disappointed hopes in areas ranging from liturgy to ecumenism to the effective critique of unjust structures. Yet, though the book helpfully maps the areas of challenge and though it provides much useful information along the way, it fails to offer the reader the requisite detail and depth to make possible responsible decision and action. The very format of the work militates against this by allotting, on an average, twelve pages to each of the very considerable topics it treats. Despite an undeniable effort to be fair, the format favors flag-waving more than critical reflection.

A joint review is, admittedly, a hazardous undertaking and one labors to relate to each work on its own terms. But I believe there is something instructive in the horizons assumed by the two books under review which has considerable bearing for the future of the Catholic enterprise. It concerns breadth of vision and depth of staying power; it concerns what truly radical transformation is. For there are those today who, espousing the right (read "left") causes, risk evacuating the Catholic thing of its unique substance. There are others who, professing to be defenders of that substance, fear to extend its reach to embrace new realities. Both stances are strangely at one in dogmatically constricting the range of admissible experience. In such a basically uncatholic ecclesial context, Mr. Noel's book might be useful in mounting a minor skirmish; but, were I equipping myself for the long march, I would be sure to pack *The Catholic Thing* in my knapsack.

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A charity beyond our claims

CALIFORNIA AND OTHER STATES OF GRACE: A MEMOIR

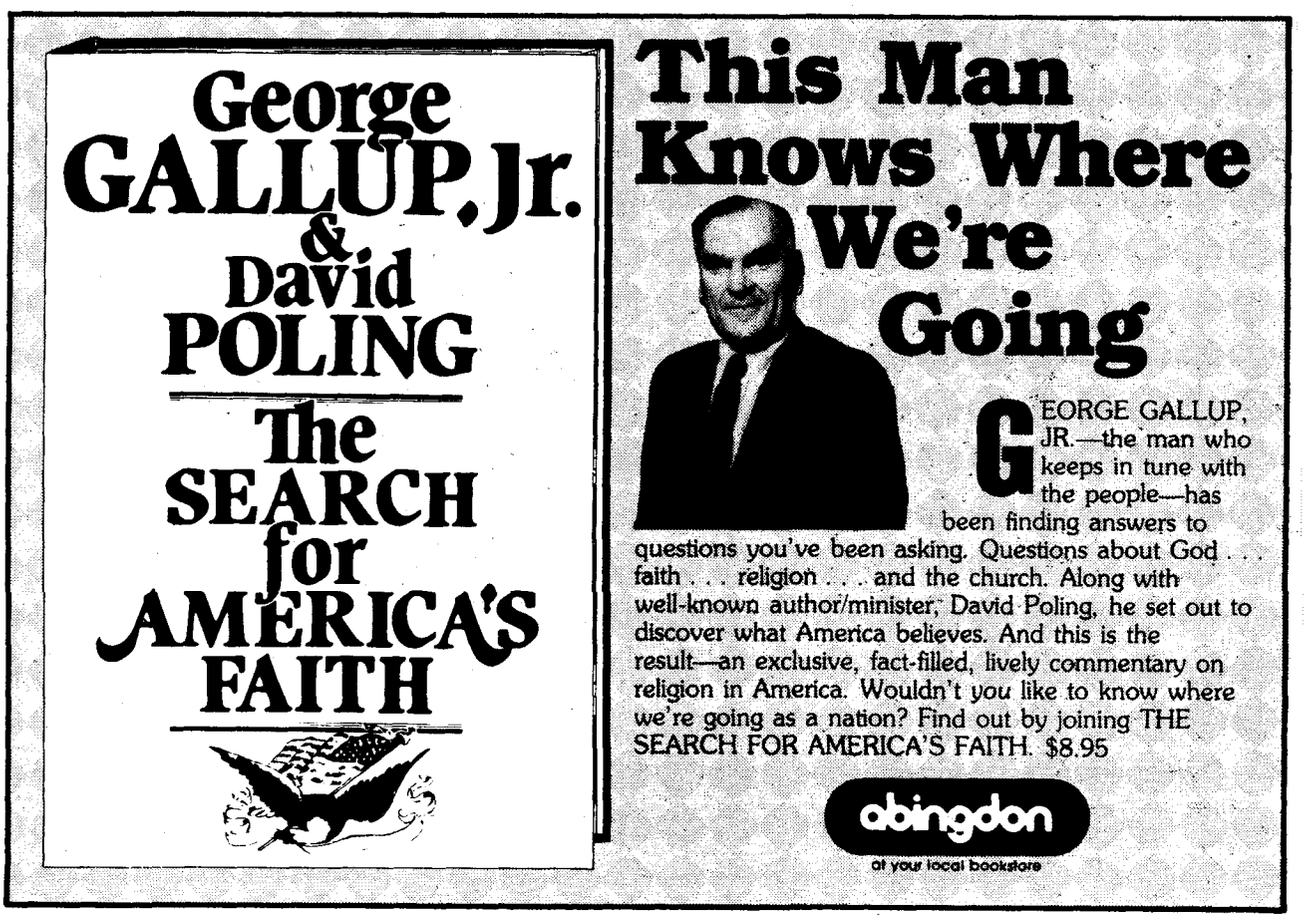
Phyllis Theroux
Morrow, $9.95, 300 pp.

Jane Howard

NOBODY should wish it on her, but Phyllis Theroux would make a good companion in a traffic jam or an overcrowded elevator. Amid any exasperation she would look hard for the humor and the irony. The fifteen essay-like chapters of *California and Other States of Grace* abound with proof of her wit and her well-honed eye and ear for detail. She remembers the girdles twelve-year old dining room hostesses were required to wear at an encampment for the Moral Re-Armament movement, an enthusiasm of one branch of her family. She recalls a movie in high school, when her date leaned toward her at a romantic moment to ask "excuse me, but would you care for a fresh stick of gum?" She tells how tediously the Tri Delts flirted with the Phi Gams at the University of Oklahoma, where she spent a largely futile year as a sort of missionary for the Newman Club. In the hospital waiting room outside what is almost her father's deathbed she notices the stacks of *Modern Maturity* and *Thoughts for the Day*, a distraction for her and her five siblings from their father's much younger mistress, "the most overqualified human being in Monterey County."

In *Mother & Son*, another compelling recent memoir, Jeremy Seabrook writes that "it isn't the aridity of family relationships that makes me sad, but the wasted richness of them." No danger that such richness will escape Theroux, whose forebears were lured from the east four generations ago by the notion that " 'there must be more,' a sentiment that has probably filled up California with more people than any other single thought." "In California, people build up empires and smash them like sandcastles tomorrow . . . I've sometimes spent two weeks working on a lead paragraph. The pace in California is difficult. Early on, finding something déclassé about California itself," she began to yearn for brick houses and men in earmuffs, which is why she went farther east to college than Berkeley, across the bay.

Luckily she wound up at Manhattanville, where in one class a nun stated her conviction that "everybody is certifiably crazy for at least twenty minutes every day." That reassured the author, who beneath her veneer of radiant popularity suffered tachycardia and contemplated the suicide she says she might have actually committed, like Sylvia Plath, had she enrolled instead at secular Smith. Catholicism is what she thinks kept her going. "Life is suffering," she was taught; "redemption can't be purchased by the proud and we are dependent upon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a charity that surpasses our capacity to claim it." To this day she finds no fault with such ideas, nor with the early lesson that "the desire to know, love, and serve God should be our first concern."

She and her siblings and parents converted to Catholicism *en masse*, "partly due to a certain inexorability that both my parents felt about making such a choice. 'We look Catholic,' said my father. 'We might as well be Catholic.' " The extended family had a bent anyway for mysticism; her cousin Tim Gallwey's book *The Inner Game of Tennis* must have pleased her mother, whose wish for all her dear ones is that they might somehow, in time, "go national." Her mother, who once curled wigs in a Shirley Temple doll factory, consults an astrologer. Her father, who used to earn his living "selling puffed raisins and dried apricots to loony bins up and down the state," celebrated his sixtieth birthday by buying a Honda motor scooter. Divorced, as Theroux now is herself, her parents "don't have a marriage anymore, but they have something. I don't quite know what it is."

She doesn't write pretentiously. For all her interest in theology Phyllis Theroux is closer in spirit and style to Jean Kerr than to Simone Weil, which is fine. But she seems to have it in her to probe her subjects a little more deeply than she here attempts to do. What's wrong isn't that she slides over her failed marriage, which presumably might be a later book's focus, but that she dwells overlong and overcutely on some of the details of her adolescence. We don't need to hear quite so much about how she wanted to be Margaret O'Brien, or how she ate so many ice cream cones she had to shop at Macy's Chubette department. Her editor should also have been more fastidious. "High energy" isn't an adjective; the bandleader Miller's name was not spelled "Glen"; "loaded to the gills" is too much of a cliché. "One couldn't help hope that it would happen to you" is not a sentence worthy of the English department of the Dominican Convent, much less Manhattanville.

What redeems this book is its author's conviction that families can keep a sense of themselves even when their headquarters are sold and their elders gone, even in the face of deracination and divorce. "We should all have one person who knows how to bless us despite the evidence," she writes. "Grandmother was that person to me." Her other grandmother, the wealthy one, was different; she "didn't like to be without whipped cream or an exit, and she often hired a taxi which she kept running outside, just in case something downtown occurred to her." A tippling uncle "ate dog food out of squash trophies and didn't give a good Goddam where [he] would be tomorrow morning." Phyllis Theroux, to her credit, cherishes unlovely eccentricities like these along with more charming traits and keeps close track of her kinsmen however randomly fate may fling them. May tribes like hers increase.

The *dulce* versus the *utile*

LITERATURE AGAINST ITSELF:
LITERARY IDEAS IN MODERN SOCIETY

Gerald Graff

University of Chicago, $15, 260 pp.

Michael Hancher

THE COMEDIAN Robin Williams has a record album out (which I haven't heard) called *Reality . . . What a Concept*. That title captures both the thesis and the antithesis of Gerald Graff's new book. The antithesis, which Professor Graff finds to be the blame of much of contemporary culture, is the post-Kantian proposition that reality is *only* a mental or linguistic concept. The countervailing thesis for which Graff argues is that our unreflective, "naive" concept of the real world is backed by various "unrefusable facts," which we had better acknowledge for our own cultural good. A subordinate cause for concern is the sappy techno-therapeutic idiom that marks the modern vernacular of both popular speech and mass culture. (Williams's album title samples and no doubt parodies that idiom.) According to Graff, this empty idiom, along with various other symptoms of our times, can be largely blamed on the epistemological disease now epidemic among professors of the humanities. They contracted that disease from reading and misreading modern and postmodern literature; therefore Graff makes an effort to set the literary record straight by surveying what is really implied by the world-views of Joyce, Borges, Barthelme and others. But it is the treason of the academic clerks that causes him the most concern and that finally dominates this book.

According to Graff, most academic approaches to language have conspired to deprive literature of its power to work upon the world. They do this by denying the referential and propositional powers of language, or the extra-literary reality of the world, or both. The old New Criticism, structuralism, post-structuralism, art-eroticization, and even the student-centered approach to Freshman English, all come under attack for surrendering the critical powers of literacy and literature just at the time when they are most needed to effect real social and cultural reform. The modern capitalist state is mindlessly agnostic regarding all serious questions of value and ideology; the consuming (in both senses) egoism of modern private life has found its own equivalent to *laissez faire* in *fais ce que voudras*; and so corporate capitalism and private egoism foster each other in grotesque symbiosis. But all the recently influential movements in literary theory have abandoned the intellectual apparatus that is needed to recognize, let alone remedy, this state of affairs. Ironically, all these movements (or eddyings) are decadent academic epiphenomena of the romantic and modernist traditions, which at their most truly creative always did manage to engage the real world in a "critical" way. The word "critical" in this sense occurs dozens of times in *Literature Against Itself*; and although Matthew Arnold is mentioned only twice, he would not have written a very different book.

Freud, too, is mentioned twice only, and Horace not at all, but it is hard not to read this book as a dispatch from some Manichaean literary contest between the pleasure principle and the reality princi-

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ple, the *dulce* versus the *utile*. Graff's efforts to justify a sense of reality have more appeal than his critique of the paltry pleasures that we have substituted for it. His strictures on "the me decade" and the "green" one before it are not calculated to make most people feel good about themselves. Many readers will find something positively unpleasant in his preferring the morality of "accountability," emblemized in one novel by "the language of contracts and bookkeeping," to the alleged "narcissism" of a fictional heroine's formulaic desire to "be treated as a human being, not as a *thing*." To invoke a classical distinction that Graff invokes in a different context, the banal abuse of such a slogan does not trivialize its essence or point.

That different context is Freshman English: Graff would remind us that there is nothing necessarily repressive or totalitarian in dispassionate "objectivity" and the related conventions of discourse that are taught in old-fashioned composition courses, just because they helped Robert McNamara get us into Vietnam. That is, the abuse of clear and efficient discourse is nothing against its essential nature. Ultimately this apology for the teaching of logical thought and writing to freshmen is no better and no worse than Aristotle's apology for teaching rhetoric to lawyers, which it very closely resembles.

Graff's central and classical claim that literature is a mimetic criticism of life depends upon our ability to distinguish the one from the other. That is why he repeatedly has to address the now orthodox notion that life and reality "out there" are mere figments of the subject's linguistic and literary imagination. The debasement of the term "fiction" by advanced literary theorists, who indiscriminately apply it to all discourse without exception, typifies the workings of the monistic juggernaut with which Graff has to do battle. He scores several points by remarking internal contradictions within this universal-fiction doctrine. Unfortunately, such points may not count against a theory that long ago abrogated the law of contradiction.

And it is, crucially, his sense of contradiction that underpins Graff's main

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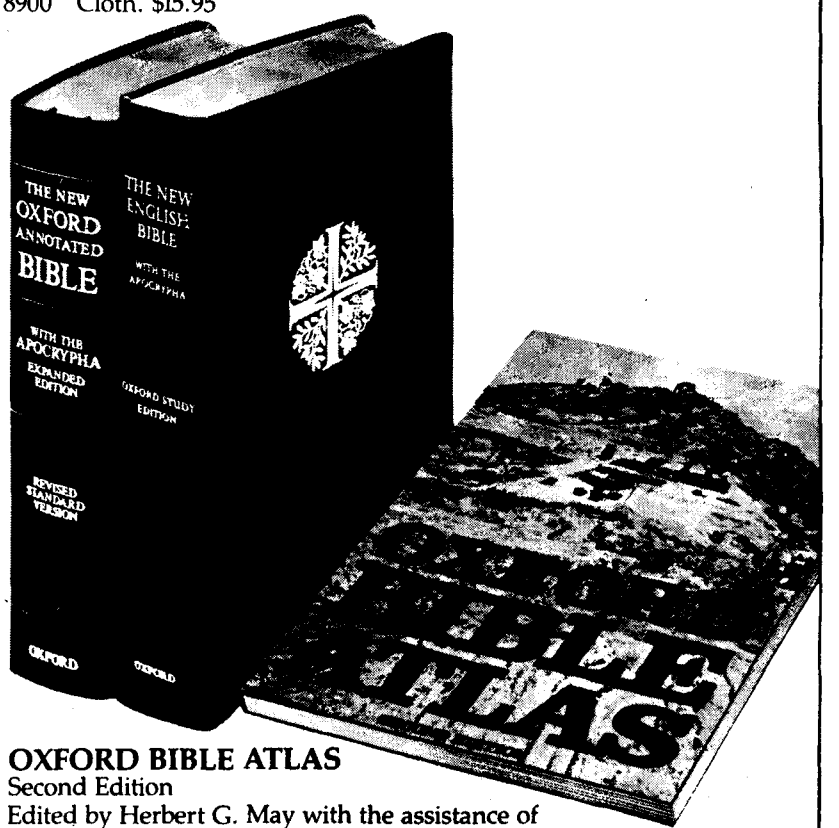

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defense of naive realism against skeptical objection. "The very act of denying all 'naive' realism presupposes an objective standpoint," he remarks early in the book; and both the gist and the terms of this remark recur again and again. (Often the point takes a somewhat broader form, patterned after a comment by the Marxist critic Georg Lukács. The implication is that all marked categories, such as "distortion," "myth," "fiction," are dialectical categories; therefore they logically "presuppose" their opposites.)

Many of Graff's subsidiary points deserve more than the terse summary that follows: He corrects the false assumption, implicit in much modern criticism, that texts which represent the ambiguity of experience are themselves necessarily indeterminate in meaning. He insists that the necessity to any discourse of some conventional code does not establish that the code or sign-system is in itself sufficient to generate meanings. In general, he argues that the preconditions of any action do not exhaust its significance; in particular, that the necessarily subjective nature of the mechanisms of perception does not in itself guarantee that the result must be in error. To secure these points he makes judicious use of the work of E. H. Gombrich, whose *Art and Illusion* has sometimes been treated as a handbook for skeptics.

Professor Graff has published humorous essays on a few of these topics, but they are not part of this book; in general the tone is earnest and even somber. The occasional joke (like calling the unrefusability of experience "the Godfather Effect") is more likely to provoke deconstruction than direct amusement. But then nobody should turn to this book for a holiday or entertainment, when Graff's main ambition is to have us recognize that literary criticism is serious work.

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Up from substructure

IRON CAGES:
Race and Culture in Nineteenth-Century America

Ronald T. Takaki
Knopf, $15.95, 361 pp.

Richard Drinnon

IN ONE of his letters from prison, Antonio Gramsci lamented the passing of "Robinsonism, which provided an imaginary world for so many generations." After reading *Robinson Crusoe* as a boy, he had "become obsessed by these things" and never left the house without preparing to be "cast onto a desert island and totally dependent upon my own resources." Echoing their master's contempt for the "vegetative" life of native peoples, Gramsci and other Marxists have shared fully the Western colonial dream of escape from "civil" society into a world without people, those desert islands where desires for domination have free play among obliging natural objects called Fridays or "natives."

Not Gramsci's letter but his currently fashionable notion of hegemony is the starting point of Ronald T. Takaki: "By culture, I essentially mean what Antonio Gramsci has called cultural hegemony, 'an order in which a certain way of life and thought is dominant, in which one concept of reality is diffused throughout society. . . .' " Seeking to understand the hegemonic Anglo-Americans, Takaki undertakes a comparative analysis of their responses to Native Americans, Afro-Americans, Chicanos, and Chinese Americans. Whites set themselves apart from and dominated all these peoples through stern self-denial or what Alfred Thayer Mahan approvingly called "self-repression." Picking up Max Weber's "iron cage" metaphor and multiplying it, Takaki argues that following 1776 the Revolutionists put their instinctual life under arrest, "promoted a republican ideology rooted in the Protestant ethic and devised what may be called republican 'iron cages' to help [white?] Americans rule the emotional part of themselves." Readied thereby for Jackson and the Market Revolution, whites appropriated Indian and Mexican lands, exploited laborers black and white, and moved into new quarters, "the corporate 'iron cage' of bureaucratic capitalism." And in the 1890s came a still more terrifying prison, the "demonic 'iron cage' " of an imperialistic war and overseas colonies.

History doyen C. Vann Woodward has reviewed this reading of our past with what Albert Camus would have called "atrocity bartering": where is any mention of what happened to aborigines south of the border, to Jews in Germany, to inmates of the Russian gulag, and—most egregiously—to racial minorities in U.S.-ravaged Indochina? But such defensiveness leaves untouched the vital importance of Takaki's topic. He need not write about victims everywhere to show that in this country repression and racism have always been locked in their unloving embrace and that caste, class, and sex are integral components of our

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national ideology. Some of his lines on the mainstream infatuation for the machine as a replacement for the human body are telling. And he has a quick eye for underlying themes: Jefferson's commitment to a "homogenous" society, for instance, found parallels decades later in Amasa Walker's dedication to straining out the "bad and vicious blood" that threatened Teutonic purity. Ambitious, provocative, and at points insightful, *Iron Cages* is, alas, a deeply flawed book.

Even in the West culture is more than hegemony, more than domination and subordination. Even were it not, Gramsci's concept has the unintended consequence of loosening its chains and letting it rise up from the mode of production as the primary agent of manipulation, mystification, and suppression; thus reprieved, culture can give rise to ideologies dialectically related to institutions but with roles of their own to play. Takaki will have none of this, however; he sees culture as "the superstructure of ideology," relates everything back to the economic substructure, and lands in one muddle after another. His three iron cages "dynamically interacted in an organic continuum," he writes, without explaining how an *organism* had crawled up into his superstructure. And iron cages that were cold, hard, and cramped, maybe, but *dynamic*? And *demonic*? Actually his first cage, the "republican," is not economic but political, and his recognition that it was forged by an ideology "rooted in the Protestant ethic" should have led him back to the still earlier Puritan iron cage that was primarily religious and Weber's insight in the first place. At the other end of this continuum of runaway metaphors, Takaki discusses end-of-the-century imperialism without showing any understanding that the earlier cages had seemed "demonic" *and* imperialistic enough to Indians and Mexicans uprooted or crushed by them. As for Filipinos, they in fact remain far beyond the horizon and Indochinese, apart from mention of "free-fire zones," farther still.

The root trouble is that this good historian has caged himself in concepts singularly inappropriate for his topic. They make him see imperialism as expressive of only the "highest" stage of capitalism and keep him from seeing that Anglo-Americans have always been imperialists and colonizers. Looking out through the bars of such notions, he makes the economy the only moving agent in the book and treats the reader to U.S. survey observations and elementary statistics on the "Transportation Revolution." Wry irony lies in the fact that Takaki's frequently perceptive profiles of figures such as Benjamin Rush, Mahan, and Walker come as welcome interruptions of his lifeless but obviously more esteemed "theoretical" sections. Finally, wrier still, these concepts betray him into the traditional Marxist undervaluation of race and culture in the formation of national ideologies. Though he uses the term, *racism* apparently has no autonomous base outside the economy and matters so little it has no index entry of its own. Though the "Market Revolution" appears often, nowhere can one find discussion of the intricate relationships among racism, nationalism, and imperialism. And nowhere is Takaki's insensitivity to the cultures under review more painfully obvious than in his explanation that *Diggers* was "a term applied to a group of California Indians," a monumental misidentification of an epithet and a legend that is nearly on the level of saying that *Niggers* was "a term applied to a group of blacks."

In 1846 Thomas Hart Benton announced in the U.S. Senate that the choice facing nonwhites was "civilization or extinction" and that choice applied to "the torpid body of old Asia." In the *New York Daily Tribune* of June 25, 1853, Benton's words were echoed by Karl Marx in his assessment of British rule in India: England had had a double mission, he wrote, "the annihilation of Asiatic society, and the laying of the material foundations of Western society in Asia." Takaki knows and quotes Benton's speech but perhaps not—despite his many Marx epigraphs—these equally fatuous remarks. At all events, he plainly has not reflected that, from Gramsci back to the beginning of Western socialism, the colonial dream has never been a capitalist monopoly.

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